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LIVES OF THE FATHERS

K. Steve McCormick

LIVES

OF

THE FATHERS

SKETCHES OF CHURCH HISTORY IN BIOGRAPHY

BY

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'The History of the Church is represented in certain respects by the history of her great men.'—BISHOP WORDSWORTH, *Ch. Hist.* iv. 119.

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LIVES OF THE FATHERS

XIII

ST. BASIL

"Συ γὰρ μόνος ἴσον ἐφήνας
καὶ βίοτον μύθῳ καὶ βιοτῆτι λόγον."—Greg. Naz.

SECTION I

BASIL'S YOUTH AND HIS LIFE AT ANNESI

Each of the great Fathers, Saints, and Teachers, may stand as a type for a whole class of Christians. Macarius and Pachomius were the chief founders of the hermit-life; Athanasius was "the Father of Orthodoxy"; Origen was the many-sided student; Cyprian the champion of hierarchy; Gregory of Nyssa and

Editions of the Works of St. Basil.

The first complete edition is that of Fronto Ducaeus, 2 vols. Paris, 1618. The best edition is the Benedictine, by Julian Garnier, Paris, 3 vols. 1721-1730, reprinted by Migne, *Patrol. Graec.* vols. 29-32. My references to the works of Basil are to the reprint of the Benedictine edition, 3 vols. Paris, 1839.

Authorities for the Life of St. Basil.

S. Basilii *Epistolae;* S. Gregorii Nazianzeni, *Orat.* xliii. *et Epistolae;* S. Gregorii Nysseni, *De Vit. Sanctae Macrinae;* Cave, *Lives of the Fathers*, ii.; Ephraem Syrus, *Encomium in Magn. Basilium;* Socrates, *H. E.* iv. 26; Sozomen, *H. E.* vi. 15-17; Theodoret, *H. E.* iv. 19; Philostorgius, *H. E.* viii. 11-13; Jer. *De Vir. ill.* 116; Photius, *Cod.* 141; Tillemont, vol. ix.; Schröckh, vol. xiii.; Böhringer, *Dei drei Kappadozier*, 1875; Eugène Fialon, *Étude Hist. et Litt. sur St. Basile*, 2me ed. Paris, 1869; J. H. Newman, *Church of the Fathers;* De Broglie, *L'Église et l'Empire.*

Gregory of Nazianzus "the Theologians"; Jerome the scholar; Augustine the Christian philosopher; Theodore of Mopsuestia the exegete; Chrysostom the orator. Basil in the East and Ambrose in the West were pre-eminently the great bishops.

Basil was born in Cappadocia,[1] and, like his illustrious friend Gregory of Nazianzus, was far from satisfied with most of his countrymen. He describes them as timid and sluggish,[2] and speaks of the severity of climate and heavy snowfalls, which kept them in their houses for months at a time. Libanius says that they breathe of γριτὴ and snow, and say to every one "I adore you."[3]

Yet there must have been homes among the Christians of Cappadocia which bloomed with every virtue. Such was the home of Gregory the elder, Bishop of Nazianzus, in which "the theologian" and his brother Caesarius grew up under the holy care of their mother Nonna. Such, in a still more striking measure, was the home of Basil, which in three generations produced three saints among its daughters, and in one generation three bishops and three saints—Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, and Peter of Sebaste—among its sons.

The family had produced not saints only but martyrs, and regarded this fact as a far higher distinction than that conferred upon it by rank and wealth. The elder Macrina, the paternal grandmother of Basil, was a Christian, as was also her husband. In the persecution of Galerius and Maximin they had been compelled to fly for safety into the wild woods of Pontus, and there for seven years they had maintained a scanty and perilous existence.[4]

Their son Basil the elder became a famous teacher of rhetoric in Neocaesarea. He was wealthy, and possessed estates in Pontus, Cappadocia, and Lesser Armenia. He married Emmelia, who, as well as her mother-in-law and her daughter Macrina the younger, has received the honour of canonisation. She was celebrated for her beauty, and was sought in marriage by many suitors, of whom she chose Basil as the most worthy.[5]

[1] Some fix his birth at an obscure "Helenopontus," others at Neocaesarea, a "Pontic city," but included in the general name Cappadocia. (Cave, ii. 216.)

[2] *Ep.* xlviii. συγγνώσῃ . . . ἡμῖν τό τε ἄτολμον τῶν Καππαδοκικῶν ἠθῶν καὶ τὸ τῶν σωμάτων δυσκίνητον ἐπιστάμενος.

[3] *Ep.* ccexlix. (*Libanius Basilio*) προσκυνῶ σε.

[4] It was natural that they should regard their sustenance as partly miraculous. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xliii. 7.

[5] Gregory of Naz., who wrote an epitaph in her honour, calls her ἐμμελείας ὄντως φερώνυμον.

Of this union were born four sons—Basil, Naucratius, Gregory (of Nyssa), and Peter (of Sebaste); and five daughters. The eldest of the family was St. Macrina the younger. Basil was born about A.D. 330.

The young Basil was endowed with the highest gifts of mind and body. While he was yet an infant he was seized with a most dangerous illness, but after earnest prayer his father saw Christ coming to him in a dream, and saying "Go, thy son liveth," and the child recovered.

It was not usual for a father in those days to undertake the personal teaching or superintendence of his children till they had attained a certain age. Basil was consigned to the care and training of his grandmother Macrina, who lived on one of the family estates at Annesi, in Pontus. Macrina had been taught by hearers of Gregory Thaumaturgus, Bishop of Neocaesarea, and she brought up her grandchild in strict orthodoxy and in admiration of Gregory and his successors, "who had shone like stars, one after another, on the episcopal throne."[1] As Gregory Thaumaturgus had been a profound admirer of Origen, and had written a panegyric on him, no doubt Basil was also trained in traditions of admiration for the great Alexandrian.

When he had grown up to boyhood he was transferred to the care of his father, who was then regarded as the best and most virtuous teacher in Pontus, and who gave him a liberal training in grammar, that is especially in the language and literature of Greece.[2] Few Easterns at that time condescended to learn Latin. None of the three great Cappadocian Fathers were acquainted with a language which the Greeks still despised as barbarous.[3] Julian indeed learnt it as an heir to the throne; and it would have saved many bitter misunderstandings in councils and elsewhere if the Greek Fathers had taken the trouble to do the same. The Greek training was, however, excellent, and the young Christian was not debarred from the enjoyment of all that was great in conduct or pure in thought in Homer, Hesiod, and the

[1] *Epp.* cciv. 2: *Γρηγόριον λέγω τὸν πάνυ καὶ ὅσοι ἐφεξῆς ἐκείνῳ . . . ἄλλος ἐπ' ἄλλῳ ὥσπερ τινὲς ἀστέρες ἐπανατέλλοντες.*

[2] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xliii. *ὃν κοινὸν παιδευτὴν ἀρετῆς ὁ Πόντος τηνικαῦτα προὐβάλλετο.* It is no doubt owing to his early training in Pontus, and his close relations with it, that Basil sometimes speaks of it as his own country, *e.g. Ep.* lxxxvii.

[3] Gregory of Naz. (*Orat.* xxi. 35) talks of the *στενότης καὶ ὀνομάτων πενία* of Latin.

tragedians, or in Heredotus and Thucydides, or in Demosthenes and the other orators—

> "Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
> Fulmined o'er Greece, and shook the arsenal
> To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne."

In opposition to the views of some Fathers, and of many mediaeval and modern writers, Basil was an earnest defender of the lawfulness and advantage of the study of Pagan literature. His great oration on the subject is full of interest, and he shows how possible it was even for a heathen sophist, much more for a Christian presbyter, to draw from the pages of the classic writers lessons not only in virtue but even in holiness.

It would have been impossible for a teacher of experience like the elder Basil not to observe the unusual intellectual gifts of his son; and being wealthy, he determined to give him the most perfect education which was then possible, by sending him for many years to the greatest centres of learning.

He sent him first to Caesarea, the capital of Cappadocia, at the foot of Mount Argaeus. The ancient name of the city was Mazaca, and it had been the residence of the former kings of Cappadocia. Its walls were in ruins, and Basil points to their débris, which were like the castles built by children on the sands, as a proof of the transiency of human magnificence. But it had grown under its new name of Caesarea into a mighty city of 400,000 inhabitants,[1] and was regarded as one of the most flourishing centres of the Graeco-Roman culture and civilisation. Here his powers were still more brilliantly developed, as we learn from the eloquent panegyric of his friend. "Let those," he says, "relate who trained the man among them, and reaped the fruits of his training, all that he was to his teachers, all that he was to his companions, rivalling the former, excelling the latter in every branch of education; how much glory he won for himself among all within a brief space of time both among the people and among the leaders of the State, displaying attainments greater than his years, and a stability of character greater than his attainments; an orator among orators even before he sought the chair of rhetoric; a philosopher among philosophers even before he learned the doctrines of philosophy; and what was greatest of all, a priest to Christians even before his priesthood. So much

[1] Zonar. xii. 630.

was conceded to him by all in all things. Yet to him eloquence was but a secondary consideration, and he only culled from it so much as to render it subservient to our philosophy. But our philosophy is earnestness, and to be severed from the world, and to be with God, earning the things above by those below, and acquiring things that are firm and permanent by these unstable things which flow away like a stream."[1]

It was at Caesarea that he first gained the friendship of Gregory, whose life was so closely linked with his; and also of Eustathius, afterwards Bishop of Sebaste,[2] whose religious and ascetic earnestness[3] he admired, but who throughout life gave him much trouble, "and was carried hither and thither like the clouds with every changing wind of doctrine."[4]

From Caesarea he went to Constantinople, where it is probable that he made the acquaintance of the eminent sophist Libanius. If the letters printed in Basil's correspondence were really interchanged between Basil and Libanius, they show how deep an impression the brilliant young Cappadocian, so eloquent and so pure, made on the mind of the Pagan sophist.[5] Their genuineness is, however, so dubious that we cannot rely upon them for biographical data.

From Constantinople, with an insatiable thirst for learning, Basil went to Athens. All our details for his life in that "golden city" are derived from the funeral oration of Gregory of Nazianzus, and have been already narrated in the Life of "the Theologian." The two young men lived together in the closest and friendliest intimacy, and as Gregory had preceded him, his friendship saved Basil from many annoyances. His reputation was already high, and was still further increased at Athens. His first sense of disappointment at the schools of that university soon wore off, and when he quitted the city after a stay of some years, it was with sincere regret. Under the Pagan Himerius of Bithynia and the Christian Proaeresius of Armenia he made great advance in eloquence and literature, which he always regarded as a *praeparatio evangelica*. He was not deceived by the glamour

[1] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xliii. 13.

[2] Sebaste (Siwas) was the capital of Lesser Armenia, on the Halys.

[3] *Ep.* ccxxiii. 3.

[4] *Ep.* ccxliv. 9.

[5] See *Epp.* cccxxxv.-ccclix. *Ep.* cccxxxiii. Libanius says *πάλαι νέον ὄντα ἠδούμην* (Liban. *Vit.* 15). Socrates (iv. 26) and Sozomen (vi. 17), in saying that Basil studied at Antioch and was there a pupil of Libanius, make the mistake of confounding him (apparently) with Basil of Antioch, the friend of Chrysostom.

of myth and morals which some of his teachers flung over the absurdities of heathen mythology, while he learnt much from their illustrations and their style. The city had many trials for a young Christian, but undoubtedly it had valuable lessons of culture to teach. Lucian tells us how once a rich and pompous student came to the university in gorgeous habiliments, his hands glittering with rings, and his person always surrounded by a cortège of slaves, and how, in a very short time, he learnt better taste and less ostentation from the general example. We may, says Mons. Fialon, apply the anecdote to the Oriental style of Gregory and Basil, which was chastened and polished by the teaching of classical models.[1]

At Athens Basil made many friends besides Gregory,[2] and among their number was Julian, the future Emperor. He does not seem to have felt towards him the profound repulsion with which he inspired Gregory. Julian was at that time from politic motives a nominal Christian, and he studied with Basil, not only the ancient classics, but also the sacred writings.[3] At a later period Julian invited Basil to stay with him, but the invitation was not accepted.[4] In another letter—if the correspondence be genuine—he speaks somewhat boastfully and menacingly, and orders Basil to have a thousand pounds of gold ready for him by the time he arrives at Caesarea on his way to the Persian war, otherwise he will destroy Caesarea. He sternly accuses Basil of speaking about him with contempt. He ends by telling him that he had read, understood, and condemned the writings which Basil had sent to him.[5] Basil, in a defiant answer, ridicules the folly of demanding a thousand pounds from a man who possesses nothing, and lives on herbs and sour wine. He ends by saying, "what you read you did not understand, for had you understood you would not have condemned."[6]

After a stay of nearly five years, about the year 358, Basil left Athens, not indeed without tears, but with no such wish

[1] Fialon, *Ét. sur St. Basil*, p. 29. See *supra*, i. 499.

[2] Among them his correspondents Hesychius, Terentius, Sophronius, Eusebius, etc.

[3] *Ep.* xli. [4] *Ep.* xxxix.

[5] *Ep.* xli. *ἀνέγνων, ἔγνων, κατέγνων.* Comp. Sozomen, v. 18, who refers to the story to a book of Apollinaris—*On the Truth.*

[6] "Α *μέντοι ἀνέγνως οὐκ ἔγνως· εἰ γὰρ ἔγνως οὐκ ἂν κατέγνως.* I mention these details here rather than in chronological order, because they depend on the doubtful genuineness of these letters. The supposed letter of Basil to Julian in the acts of the Second Nicene Council is spurious.

as that which Julian expressed—that he might live and die there. He returned through Constantinople to Caesarea, hoping to find there the rhetorician Eustathius.[1] In this hope he was disappointed, but he stayed at Caesarea, and, yielding to the wishes of his fellow-citizens, he gave them some specimens of his oratorical power, both as a pleader and a teacher of rhetoric. "Some concessions," says Gregory, "we made to the world and to the stage, but only enough to satisfy the desire of many, for we had no fondness for ostentation and publicity." It is clear, however, from a letter of Gregory to Basil that at this time he was not insensible to the pleasures and attractions of the capital, nor to the distinctions which he was earning among his fellow-citizens. His fame, indeed, was widely spread, and the people of Neocaesarea sent him a deputation, earnestly requesting that he would undertake the training of their youth. He declined the request; but his saintly sister Macrina was at this time deeply anxious lest he should devote himself to the world rather than to God. She saw that the besetting temptations of his character were pride and ambition, and that he was excessively inflated by his oratorical reputation. To her he seemed to despise all dignities, and to look down from the height of his imaginary superiority on those who held brilliant court positions.[2] But he did not long follow these shadows. About this time his heart was deeply stirred by the grace of God, and he received baptism, probably at the hands of his revered friend the aged Bishop Dianius.[3] It is in his answer to the attacks of Eustathius of Sebaste that he tells us most of this deepening of his religious experiences. "When I had devoted much time," he says,[4] "to vanity, and had wasted almost all my youth in empty toil, which I spent in occupying myself with the attainment of the branches of a wisdom which God has blighted,—when at last, as though arising from a deep sleep, I cast my glance upon the marvellous light of the truth of the Gospel, and recognised the uselessness of the wisdom of the rulers of the world, who are being done away,—after having much bewept my miserable life, I prayed that guidance might be granted me to enter into the doctrines of holiness. Above all else, it was my care to bring about some

[1] *Ep.* i.

[2] Greg. Nyss. *Vit. S. Macr.*

[3] *De Spir. Sanct.* xxix. 71. The story of his being baptized by Maximus, Bishop of Jerusalem, in the river Jordan, and other details given by the pseudo-Amphilochius in his *Life of Basil* may be passed over in silence as entirely without foundation.

[4] *Ep.* ccxxiii. 2.

amendment of my character, which had been perverted by long intercourse with evil. On reading the Gospel, therefore, and seeing that the selling of our goods and participation with our needy brethren, and indifference to this present life is the best road to perfection, I prayed that I might find one of my brethren who had chosen this path, so that with him I might be conveyed across this brief wave of life. And indeed I found many at Alexandria, and many throughout the rest of Egypt, and others in Palestine, and Coele-Syria, and Mesopotamia. I admired their temperance in daily food, I admired their endurance in labours, I was amazed by their earnestness in prayers, how they mastered sleep, being subdued by no physical need, ever preserving lofty and unfettered the thought of their soul, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness. Never caring for the body, nor condescending to spend any anxiety upon it, but living as though their flesh were not their own, they showed in deed what it is to live as aliens in things here, and to have their citizenship in heaven. Admiring this, and deeming the life of these men happy, because they really show that they are bearing about in the body the mortification of Jesus, I prayed that I myself also, as far as my powers would reach, might be an imitator of those men. On this account then, seeing that some in my native land were trying to emulate their deeds, I thought that I had discovered some aid to my salvation, and from what I saw I deduced an inference about the things I did not see." [1]

One object of his journey to Alexandria—where he did not intend to stay long—was to see Athanasius. In this he failed, for the great patriarch was wandering in the desert during one of his exiles. But what he did see was that, even amid the incessant perils with which his life was threatened, the Archbishop of Alexandria could always find protection in the devotion of an army of monks. Basil thought that the Church was distracted, that many Christians were servants of Christ in name alone, and that monasticism was more calculated than any other institution to defend the Nicene faith against the subtle and manifold assaults of heresies, which were springing up on every side.[2]

[1] The allusion is to Eustathius of Sebaste, but he adds that he was mistaken in the supposition that an ascetic life could in any way vouch for a pure doctrine.

[2] Basil, like other monastic founders, experienced later on that monks were not always peaceful, and that their zeal was sometimes singularly lacking in discretion.

Had it not been for Basil, says Sozomen,[1] the heresy of Eunomius would have spread from the Hellespont to the Taurus, and the heresy of Apollinaris from the Taurus to Egypt.

Basil was not the man to do anything by halves. When he gave himself to God, he did so wholly. What special influence had opened his heart to the grace of God he has not told us, but amid the uncertain chronology of his life we may assume that his convictions were much solemnised by the example and death of his second brother Naucratius. This youth, like the other members of his family, was endowed by nature with a fine understanding and a beautiful presence. He was eminent as an athlete, and at the age of twenty-two he began to display a remarkable eloquence. But he was suddenly seized with the prevalent fervour, and, throwing up every earthly prospect, he retired to a life of poverty, obscurity, and toil in the wooded hills of Pontus, near Annesi (Ἄννησοι), where his mother and sister had fixed their home. On these hills lived a few sick, aged, and poverty-stricken hermits, and Naucratius devoted himself to their service as a hunter and fisherman. For five years he lived in this manner, while at the same time he listened to all the behests of his mother and sister. One day he and his attendant Crysaphius, who had followed him into the solitary life, were found dead, and were carried home. They had gone out fishing, and probably had been drowned by accident in the eddies of the rapid and treacherous river Iris.[2] His mother Emmelia happened to be three days distant from her home; when the news was sent to her she fainted away, and it needed all the efforts of Macrina to bring consolation to her bereaved spirit.

Basil's determination to give up all to the glory of God was adopted with perfect deliberation, and indeed he and Gregory had vowed themselves to the monastic life even when they were students at Athens. Monasteries were as yet almost unknown in Asia Minor, and Basil determined to make a long journey to Egypt and Palestine, and see with his own eyes the mode of life pursued by the desert communities. At Alexandria he was detained by one of the numerous attacks of sickness to which he rendered himself liable by the exaggerated austerities which ruined his naturally fine and healthy physique. From the East

[1] Sozomen, vi. 27.

[2] The Iris—now the Kasalmak—rises in the chain of Antitaurus in the south of Pontus.

he carried away two fruitful convictions—the one, that men ought not to live in absolute solitude, the other, that fixed rules were necessary to restrain the extravagances of enthusiastic self-sacrifice. At one time he seriously thought of settling in the Tiberine district with Gregory, who was detained at Nazianzus by his duty towards his aged parents. But on a visit to Annesi he found the glorious and romantic solitude on the banks of the Iris, of which he gives to his friend so poetic a description. The rarity of such descriptions in the remains of classical antiquity indicates that Basil must have been peculiarly susceptible to the beauty of the scenes in which he lived. Such a spot seemed to him infinitely preferable to the flat and dreary neighbourhood of Nazianzus, and it had the additional advantage of being in the immediate vicinity of the home where Emmelia and Macrina were spending their saintly lives. To this spot, therefore, he retired with his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and others who desired "to embrace philosophy"—that is, to live as monks—with him.

The life which he lived was one of great severity. Of his earthly possessions he had retained only the garments which he wore. By night, that he might not be seen of men, he clothed himself in sackcloth. By day he had but one tunic and one outer garment. His pallet was laid on the bare ground, and the hours of darkness were often devoted to vigils. His drink was water, his food bread and salt, his occupation labour and study. In reply to the enquiries of Gregory, he has described his method of life.[1] It had its joys and its sorrows. We have already seen the fervent yearning with which Gregory looked back upon it, and on the peaceful, happy hours under the golden plane-tree which they had planted.[2] Yet it required sincerity and enthusiasm to put up with the necessary hardships—"the roofless and doorless hut, the fireless and smokeless hearth, the walls dried with heat that the inmates might not be hit by the droppings of mud, in which they lived like condemned Tantaluses, thirsting amid waters." Gregory speaks of "the miserable and unnourishing banquet to which we, like shipwrecked mariners, were invited from Cappadocia, not as though to the penury of the lotus-eaters, but as to the table of Alcinous. I remember the loaves and the soup (for so they were called) and I shall always remember them, since my teeth slipped about the hunks and afterwards dragged

[1] *Ep.* ii. [2] Greg. Naz. *Ep.* vi.; *supra*, i. 514-515.

themselves out as though from mortar. You will yourself describe these things in tones of loftier tragedy, deriving your grand speech from your own calamities. Had not your mother, great and true nurturer of the poor, delivered us from this condition of things, appearing like a haven in due season to those tossed with storm, we should long ago have been dead, not so much being praised as pitied for our Pontic fidelity. How can I omit to mention those herbless and cabbageless gardens, and the clearing from the house of that Augean mire, when, with these necks and these hands, which still bear the traces of these toils, we dragged that mountain-like waggon (Oh earth and sun! Oh air and Oh virtue!—for I will tragedise a little!), not that we might yoke the Hellespont, but that we might make level the precipice."[1] Basil spoke with scarcely less enthusiasm. He found in this "philosophy" the oak of Mamre, the ladder which mounted to heaven, the camp of Mahanaim, the Carmel of Elijah, the wilderness of the Baptist, the Mount of Olives.[2]

The aim of the monk was tranquillity of mind, by fixing the eyes of his soul on the one thing needful instead of distracting them with the thousand cares of the world, the anxieties of marriage, the troubles of paternity, the government of servants, the frivolous quarrels of society, the absorption of business. These were excluded from the lonely life. "What then is more blessed than to imitate on the earth the concert of angels; than to haste to prayer at the very dawn of day, and to honour the Creator with hymns and songs; then, when the sun shines clearly, turning to work in which prayer is ever present, to spice our labours with hymns as with salt?" Then how fruitful and undisturbed was the study of the Scripture, how careful and restrained the right use of speech! The monks walked with modest and downcast eyes, in a sordid garment, with unkempt hair, like mourners. They walked with slow footsteps, and they only gave up one constantly varying hour of the twenty-four to a single meal of the very simplest and most necessary food. "What I myself do," writes Basil, "at this end of the earth I am ashamed to tell you. For I have left my mode of life in the city as the cause of unnumbered evils, but I have not yet been able to leave myself behind also. But I am like those at sea, who, from their inexperience in voyages are distressed and sea-sick, and because they are uneasy at the size of

[1] Greg. Naz. *Ep.* v.

[2] Basil, *Ep.* xlii. 5, xliii.

the vessel as though it caused the agitation of the waves, get out of it into the cockboat or galley, but are sea-sick and distressed everywhere, for the discomfort and the bile transfers itself with them wherever they go. That, then, is very much my condition; for, carrying about with me my own innate passions, I am everywhere in the same perturbations, so that I have not reaped any great advantage from this solitude."[1] Alas! the experience of Basil must have been the experience of thousands. A man may change his habits, his circumstances, his country, but everywhere he carries with him his own self. It might have taught the monks that a man may be safer in the common duties of the world than in the self-absorbed monotony of the cloister—

"Patriae quis exsul
Se quoque fugit?"[2]

But Basil's conception of the monastic life was wiser and more moderate than that of his Egyptian and other contemporaries, and no rules are more sensible than those which he drew up with the assistance of Gregory, and which became the model for numberless Asiatic monasteries.[3] Two lines of the Nazianzene indicate his ideal. "I walked," he says, "in the mid-path between the anchorets and the coenobites, seeking the contemplativeness of the one class, the usefulness of the other."[4] Basil did not altogether approve of solitary hermits. He regarded their life as too selfish and purely introspective; as lacking the element of fraternal correction and example; as deficient in opportunities for the exercise of charity.[5] Basil was practically the founder of monastic institutions in Pontus and Cappadocia. The extraordinary waverer, Eustathius of Sebaste, whose friendship he seems at this time to have formed and whose ascetic strictness he admired, had many followers, but they seem to

[1] *Ep.* ii. 2.

[2] We learn from an anecdote told by Cassian (*Instit.* vi. 19, where Basil says, "Et mulierem ignoro et virgo non sum") that he had to face the same spiritual struggles as those which Jerome so vividly describes.

[3] To Basil, however, seems to be due the institution of *irrevocable vows*, and that rule was one of very doubtful wisdom. See Helyot, *Hist. des Ordres Monast.* i. ch. iii.; Montalembert, *Moines d'Occident*, i. 106.

[4] Greg. *Carm.* xi.—

μέσην τιν' ἦλθον ἀζύγων καὶ μιγάδων
τῶν μὲν τὸ συννοῦν τῶν δὲ τὸ χρηστὸν φέρων.

Comp. id. *Orat.* xix. 16.

[5] Basil, *Regulae fusius tractatae. Resp.* 7.

have been neither hermits nor coenobites, nor *migades* (*i.e.* monks who moved from place to place), but to have lived together in towns and villages in little bodies of two or three.[1] Basil, on the other hand, according to Rufinus, seems to have made a tour through the cities of Pontus, and to have built and established regular monasteries, which accepted his rules. During his retreat he was not stationary, but is believed to have visited Constantinople among other places, and to have aided Basil of Ancyra in his struggles against heresy at the council in 359. Most of his time, however, was spent in the monastery on the hills above the Iris. It was there that he laboured and read the Scriptures with the friend of his youth. The extracts from Origen called *Philokalia* were a fruit of their joint studies, and Basil also wrote his *Moralia* and many letters. His house was in fact an ascetic college or coenobium.[2]

There was little difficulty in finding monks. The times were trying and terrible; military service involved intolerable burdens; there was intense poverty among the country labourers and city artisans. Orphans and other children were brought by their relatives to be trained in these severe and holy solitudes. Slaves were permitted by their masters to retire into their shelter. The growing belief that marriage was in itself either unholy or undesirable caused many married persons to separate and to retire from the world. Besides this, the enthusiasm of the young often won their elders to join them. When Basil sent back to his mother the youthful Dionysius, he sent him with this charming little note: "There is," he said, "an art of catching doves of this kind. When the fowlers have caught one, and have made it so tame as to eat out of their hands, then, anointing its wings with perfume, they let it join the rest of the flock. The fragrance of that perfume makes the whole flock the property of the man who has got the tame dove; for the rest, too, follow the scent of the perfume, and are shut up in the dovecot. But why do I begin my letter thus? Because having got your son Dionysius, and having anointed the wings of his soul with the Divine perfume, I have sent him to your worthiness, that you

[1] Rufin. *H. E.* ii. 9; Sozomen, vi. 16. From a genial little note of Gregory to Amphilochius, it has been inferred that each of Basil's monks had a separate cell, for in that note Gregory begs Amphilochius to send him some vegetables, since he is expecting the great Basil to come to supper. The note (*Ep.* xxv.) belongs, however, to another date. The Benedictine editors (ii. 23) correct the mistake of Baronius, *Vit. Gregor. ap. Bolland*, p. 387.

[2] See *supra*, i. 515-516.

yourself too may fly with him and occupy the nest which he has built with us." [1]

The approval of monasticism was, however, far from universal. Pagan writers like Libanius and Eunapius were very severe on "the black men," and Zosimus said that for the good of the poor they had reduced to mendicity a great part of mankind. Even Christians asked why the monks could not live pure and happy lives in the world just as many priests and bishops did. Gregory of Nazianzus answered by a little apologue. The swallows, he said, rallied the swans on their loneliness, and on the extreme rarity of their song, while they, the swallows, twittered about every house in every town. "Frivolous creatures!" replied the swans, "to hear the music we make when we give our wings to the sweet and harmonious breathing of the zephyr, men come even into the wilderness. We sing little and but to few, but we love melody, wisely and in measure, and we do not mingle music with tumult." [2]

[1] *Ep.* x. [2] Greg. Naz. *Ep.* cxiv.

XIII

Continued

BASIL AS PRESBYTER

"Ἀριστεὺς περιδέξιος."—Greg. Nyss.

SECTION II

It was hardly to be expected that such a man as Basil—so brilliant, so eloquent, so orthodox a theologian—should have been suffered to spend his life in a hut on a wooded hill in the wilds of Pontus. The Church needed his services. "The education of these Fathers," says Fialon, "took them in the cradle, and seated them at last on the steps of the episcopal throne. Thirty years of study were the preparation for scarcely twenty years of work; the hardships of asceticism, the fatigues of the episcopate, the struggles of religious conflict soon exhausted these laborious lives."

The condition of the Church, as described by Gregory and Basil, was in many respects deplorable. It was a time of anarchy. "There was no king in Israel," says Basil, "every one did that which was right in his own eyes." In matters of opinion, some were the merest traditionalists without any pretence of original enquiry, while others, with equal bigotry, were fierce against sound doctrine. Heretics, ignorant and rash, flung themselves like swine upon the pearls of truth. Others rejoiced in a feeble eclecticism. In Asia Minor the heretical writings of Eunomius of Galatia were in the hands of multitudes. Unworthy pastors trafficked with the word of God and were hated by the multitude for their greedy rapacity.[1] Simoniacal bishops ordained presbyters for money or from nepotism, and of these

[1] Basil, *Ep.* ciii.

presbyters many sought ordination only that they might escape the burdens of military service.[1] Some were so poor that, being compelled to work for their own bread, they had no time to teach the people,[2] but were occupied all day in sedentary arts.[3] Of the bishops, as Gregory so often and so bitterly complains, many were worldly, avaricious, and proud, looking down with disdain upon men far superior to themselves.[4] Their intestine dissensions made them an object of ridicule on the stage, and of sorrow to good Christians.

In such a state of things a great man like Basil was necessary, and could not be overlooked. His features and bearing—his lofty figure, pale face, keen eye, and grave demeanour—marked his patrician origin. The natural distinction of his character overawed his enemies and charmed his friends. Even his personal peculiarities were zealously imitated. He was a born ruler, who could hardly suppress by Christian humility the sense of his own superiority. His epithet, "the Great," is due less to his actual writings, which were exceeded both in depth and eloquence by those of others, but to the profound impression made by his conduct and character upon his contemporaries.[5] He showed the rare mixture of Eastern dignity with Greek quickness and charm. The little letter about the doves which I have quoted is only one of many, so bright and graceful that they might have come out of the Greek Anthology.[6] "You used to write to me briefly," he says to Olympius, "but now not even briefly; and your brevity, as it advances with time, seems likely to become perfect taciturnity. Resume your old habit then. I will not blame your laconic style any longer, but will greatly value your little letters as signs of a great affection. Only write to me."[7] And again, "Each seasonable produce comes in its due season; flowers in the spring, corn-ears in the summer, apples in the autumn; so the fruits of winter are words."[8] To the Praefect Antipater he writes a letter of congratulation on his having been restored to health by cabbage and vinegar, "How excellent is philosophy, both on other accounts and because she does not allow her votaries even to be cured at great

[1] *Ep.* liii. [2] *Ep.* lxxxi.

[3] *Ep.* cxcviii. ἐκεῖθεν ἔχοντας τὴν ἀφορμὴν τοῦ ἐφημέριου βιού.

[4] *Orat.* ii. 84, 85; xliii. 26: σοβαρῶς προκαθέζεται καὶ τὴν ὀφρὺν αἴρει κατὰ τῶν βελτιόνων.

[5] He actually set the fashion to monks and bishops!

[6] Fialon, p. 64 [7] *Ep.* xii. [8] *Ep.* xiii.

expense; but with her the same thing is both a delicacy and efficacious for health. The proverb speaks ill of cabbage, but henceforth I shall think nothing of any value in comparison to it, not even the Homeric Lotus, nay, not even that ambrosia, whatever it was, which saved the Olympians."[1]

Basil had been made a "reader" in the second year of his retreat (359), and it was in that capacity that he had accompanied Eustathius of Sebaste and Basil of Ancyra, who were sent as delegates from the Council of Seleucia to a council at Constantinople.[2] Dianius, Bishop of Caesarea, who was all the dearer and more venerable to him because he had received baptism at his hands on his return from Athens, wished to attach him permanently to the Church of Caesarea.[3] Dianius was a man of sweet and noble character, frank, generous, and patient. Basil had been accustomed to look up to him as a model of virtue;[4] but unhappily he was by no means a strong theologian, and in the innocence of his heart had been led by lack of knowledge and ability to join the Council of Antioch (341) in condemning Athanasius, and placing the worthless George of Cappadocia upon his episcopal throne. At Sardica in 347 he had shown similar weakness, and finally—at the instance of George and of Constantius—he had been misled (like the elder Gregory) into signing the creed of Rimini (359). It is probable that, like other sincerely pious bishops of his day, he failed to see the chasm of difference which lay between *Homoousios* and *Homoiousios*, not only from the superficial view that the peace of the Church was not to be troubled for the sake of an *iota*, but far more, because the Nicene Homoousians were suspected of leanings towards the heresy of Sabellius. But, however this may be, the error of a bishop whom he loved and honoured was a severe blow to Basil, and although he could not anathematise Dianius, he felt unable any longer to communicate with him, and

[1] *Ep.* clxxxvi.

[2] Athanasius was unable to be at the council, and Basil's position was then too humble to allow of his making much head against such bishops as the Semi-Arians Eudoxius, Aetius, and Eunomius, nor could he prevent Constantius from imposing on the assembly the Semi-Arian creed of Rimini. Eunomius charges Basil with cowardice and indifference, but such charges were probably due to theological hatred. All we know of the matter is from his brother, Gregory of Nyssa (*c. Eunom.* i. 312), and the Arian Philostorgius (iv. 12), who says of Basil τῷ τῆς γνώμης ἀθαρσεῖ ποὸς τοὺς κοινοὺς ὑποστελλόμενος ἀγῶνας. His own allusion (*Ep.* ccxxiii. 5) implies that he had not been so inactive as Eunomius asserted.

[3] *De Spir. Sanct.* 29.

[4] *Ep.* li.

fled from Caesarea, first to Gregory at Nazianzus, and then to his Pontic solitude.[1] It was probably during this retreat that he wrote his three books against Eunomius.

Meanwhile Constantius died (361), and Julian succeeded. In the threatened revival of Paganism Dianius more than ever yearned for the support of the young and eloquent reader who had vainly tried to save him from his fatal concession to George of Cappadocia. He sent for Basil, and Basil came. He felt, as Gregory felt about his father in similar circumstances, that "the ink had not stained the soul." Dianius assured him that if he had signed an heretical document he had only done so in the simplicity and sincerity of his heart. He had merely failed to understand that by so doing he had compromised the faith. "I call God to witness," he said, "that I never intended any injury to the Nicene faith, and I pray that I may never be dissociated from the lot of the blessed 318 bishops who announced to the world that blessed doctrine." After this what could Basil do but return to communion with the good old man who was already laid on the bed of sickness? Like Athanasius, he never showed hostility to those who merely failed through weakness or ignorance. "Such," says Basil, "were my relations to Dianius. But if any one charges me with any wrong against him let him not slavishly mutter about it in a corner, but coming out into open light, let him boldly convict me."[2]

Not long afterwards Dianius died, probably in 362. The election of his successor was accompanied by the wild tumults which at that time were so disgracefully common. The people demanded the election of a magistrate named Eusebius, a man of high character, but who was not even baptized. With the aid of soldiers they seized his person, hurried him to the church, presented him to the assembled bishops, and by the force of clamour and menace, compelled them to baptize him, and place him on the archiepiscopal throne.[3] When the crowd retired, the bishops wished to annul the election, but were prevented from doing so by the stout good sense of the aged Bishop of Nazianzus. The Emperor Julian was already on his way to Caesarea, burning with indignation against the citizens because they had destroyed the Temple of Fortune. He was displeased

[1] See *Ep.* viii., in which he apologises to the Caesareans for his departure; and *Ep.* li., in which he tells the Bishop Bosporius that he never anathematised Dianius. [2] *Ep.* li. 2. [3] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xix. 36.

at the election, because it deprived him of the services of a valuable officer, and he instructed the governor to order the bishops to set it aside. Once more the aged Gregory stood in the breach. "We acknowledge but one king, that is God," he wrote to the governor. "To Him alone we are responsible. There are many matters in which you may command and compel us, but not in such a question as this, in which our conduct has been regular and legal." The governor admired the manly boldness of the letter, and the Emperor was content to let the matter drop. Gregory says that he and Basil "had the honour of the Cyclops, to be reserved last for punishment."[1]

In 364 Basil was ordained presbyter by Eusebius. It was against his will, as we learn from a letter of his friend Gregory, who had been similarly forced to ascend "the sacred throne of the priesthood." Gregory advises his friend to acquiesce, as he himself had done in this involuntary ordination, and to see in it the action of the Holy Spirit, although it put an end to all their dreams of monastic solitude.[2] Basil accepted this advice, and we never hear another murmur at an event which practically shaped and gave efficacy to the main work of his life.

The unacquaintance with theology and with ecclesiastical affairs which was inevitable in a man who had been an unbaptized civilian the day before he became archbishop, rendered it most necessary for Eusebius to have a trained scholar at his side. A vast amount of business was thus devolved upon Basil. "My letters to you," he writes to the sophist Leontius, "are rare, but not rarer than yours. Yet you have leisure, and I have none. It is no trouble to a sophist to write. A tongue that is both sophistic and Attic will converse with itself, even if no one is present, and will never be silent, any more than the nightingales when the spring rouses them to song."[3]

But, useful as Basil was, the new bishop did not at all like to see himself eclipsed. Everybody praised the young presbyter, to whom the bishop had resigned the chief part of the labour of preaching, and Eusebius could not control, much less suppress, the bitterness of jealousy. Gregory drops a veil over the rupture that followed. Finding the naturally imperious manner of Basil quite insupportable, the bishop (according to Sozomen[4]) drove him

[1] Greg. Naz. *ib.* v. 39 : τὴν κυκλώπειον ἐτίμας τιμήν. The letters of Julian to Basil would belong, if they were genuine, to this year.
[2] Greg. Naz. *Ep.* xi. [3] *Ep.* xx. [4] Sozom. vi. 17.

from the church, and covered him with insults. All that Gregory says is, that he will not enter into the causes of the quarrel, but that Eusebius "suffered something human in regard to Basil, since Momus seizes not only on the multitude, but even on the noblest."[1] Basil might easily have resisted the bishop, whose election had been displeasing to many. He might have headed a party and founded a schism, but he found a good angel—now as always—in Gregory, to whom he went at once. In the quiet conversations at Nazianzus Gregory advised him to yield as a disciple of Him who said "Blessed are the peacemakers." Once more the two friends retired together to the beloved solitude of Annesi.

Meanwhile fresh dangers threatened the hapless Church of Caesarea. The death of Julian in 363[2] was followed the next year by that of Jovian, and the Arian Valens became Emperor of the East. Baptized by Eudoxius, the Arian Patriarch of Constantinople, the new Emperor determined to follow the bad example of his predecessors, and to use force for the propagation of his religious opinions. He marched through the provinces surrounded by his heretics. "A cloud full of hail, shrilling ruin, and crushing every church over which it burst, gathered over us—I mean the most gold-loving and Christ-hating Emperor, sick of the two greatest diseases, insatiableness and blasphemy; the persecutor Valens after the persecutor Julian, and after the Apostate, not, indeed, an apostate, but one no better for true Christians." Eusebius felt more than ever the need of a helper. The only man who could replace Basil was his friend Gregory, but when Eusebius wrote to Gregory, he (as we have seen) wrote a frank letter, in which he refused to assist one who was so unjust to his friend. The result of the correspondence was that Eusebius, in his extreme need, came to a better frame of mind. Basil, at his friend's request, met the bishop's advances half-way, and the indispensable presbyter returned to the city, in which his presence was so urgently needed. After this Basil was more humble and Eusebius less jealous. They worked together side by side, but in point of fact Basil became bishop in all but name,

[1] Greg. *Orat.* xliii. 28. Fialon (p. 76) conjectures that Basil was thinking of Eusebius when, in his *Commentary on Is. i.* sec. 57, he speaks of men who arrogantly think that they can do without advisers.

[2] In the Alexandrian *Chronicon* we have a story of Basil's vision of the death of Julian. It rests on no foundation. See Cave, ii. 223.

and Eusebius, who had learnt wisdom by experience, contented himself with the reality of honour and the semblance of power.[1]

Then began for Basil several years of most honourable activity. Independent towards rulers, he was kind to the poor, hospitable to friends and strangers, a careful guide to the virgins and the monks, a wise organiser of the institutions of his parish and the services of his Church. As a preacher he was indefatigable, touching the hearts of men by his earnestness, while he kindled their admiration by his eloquence, so that even the workmen of Caesarea crowded to hear him, and he was obliged to shorten his discourses that he might not trespass too long upon their available time.[2] He preached on fasting, on drunkenness, and many other subjects, but his most famous sermons were the nine homilies on the six days' work of creation, in which he turned to practical considerations the exposition, which, however scientifically erroneous, was founded on the best knowledge which was then available.

In 368 his fame shone out in its fullest splendour. Caesarea was afflicted with hailstorms, floods, earthquakes, and finally by a terrible famine, which was increased by the wicked greed of the speculators in corn. Basil at this time received an invitation to visit his friend Eusebius, Bishop of Samosata, but he wrote that the duty of supporting the poor and destitute would prevent him from coming.[3] It was during this time that he delivered his homily of consolation during the time of drought. But he did more than console. He had inherited some property at the death of his mother, and this property he unhesitatingly sold in order to distribute the money among the starving poor. In this way all were fed of every age and both sexes, and among them even the Jews of Caesarea.[4] He touched the hearts of the rich, and induced them to open their stores, and he became a new Joseph for suffering Cappadocia.[5]

The death of his mother Emmelia was a terrible blow to him. "Were I," he writes to Eusebius of Samosata, "to detail to you all the causes by which up to the present time I have been detained, I should tell an interminable story—sicknesses one after another, the trouble of the winter, incessant business. . . . But now I have been deprived by my sins of the sole consolation in life which was left to me—my mother. Do not laugh me to

[1] *Orat.* xliii. 30. [2] *Hexaem.* iii. 1. [3] *Ep.* xxxi.
[4] Greg. Nyss. *in laud. Bas.* [5] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xliii. 34, 35.

scorn if even at this age I bewail my orphanhood, but pardon me if I cannot bear with patience the separation from a soul to which I see nothing comparable in the things that are left me. Hence my attacks of sickness once more came upon me, and once more I am confined to my bed, . . . almost expecting from hour to hour the necessary termination of my life." [1]

But the most important epoch of Basil's life had not yet begun.

[1] *Ep.* XXX.

XIII

Continued

BASIL AS BISHOP

"'Απορούμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ εξαπορούμενοι."—2 Cor. iv. 8.

SECTION III

In 370 Eusebius, Exarch of Caesarea, died, and the city was at once plunged into the usual tumult of intrigue. Every one must have felt that Basil was the fittest man to choose. He was the ablest, the most eloquent, the most learned candidate whom the diocese could produce, and, besides this, he had practically been the bishop and benefactor of Caesarea alike under Dianius and under Eusebius. The best of the people and of the clergy, together with the monks, were in his favour; but many were bitterly opposed to him. God honoured him as He has honoured many of His servants, by making all bad men his enemies. The wealthy and luxurious, whose vices and whose selfishness he had unsparingly attacked, desired a bishop of the worldly-pompous and not of the ascetic type. The mass of the populace wished for an Exarch—for the bishop held this authority—who would not incessantly oppose and denounce their circus and their amphitheatre. The governor of the city did not want to have in Basil a powerful rival. The majority of even the country bishops were unfavourable to his claims, because they knew his unflinching adhesion to the Nicene orthodoxy, while many of them were inclined to Semi-Arianism and to other heresies. Many other persons who had more or less voice in the selection of a bishop, were keenly aware that the Emperor Valens was a persecuting Arian, and that the government of such a man as Basil might

tend to embroil the city with the civil power. Some of Basil's opponents objected to him on the ground of weak health, so that the elder Gregory had to ask them "whether they wanted a bishop or a gladiator?"

There can be no doubt that Basil himself was deeply anxious about the matter. He knew that there was one man whose fame and eloquence and counsel would give him most effectual help—the friend of his life, Gregory of Nazianzus. But he knew that the shrinking, timid character of Gregory, joined possibly to the fear that he might himself be nominated, would be likely to keep him away from the theatre of action. He therefore took the strange and unworthy step of writing that he was ill, that he was dying, and that he wished to see Gregory to bid him farewell, while at the same time he did not say a word about the death of Eusebius. Overwhelmed with sorrow, Gregory instantly prepared to start for Caesarea. But meanwhile the bishops—who had to receive the suffrages of the clergy and people, and to take part in the consecration—had received official news of the vacancy, and were beginning to hurry from their dioceses to Caesarea. Gregory's eyes were at once opened to the true state of the case, and in a letter full of dignified severity he wrote to reproach his friend for this underhand method of procedure, and advised him to behave in the matter with more wisdom and prudence. He saw, however, that in the election of Basil was involved the orthodoxy of the Church of Caesarea, and his father was even more anxious about the matter than he was. Probably both the bishop and Basil thought that the younger Gregory indulged too much in the luxury of a puerile scrupulosity. The old bishop threw himself heart and soul into the cause of Basil. He took two steps of the utmost importance. He wrote to Eusebius of Samosata, urging him at all costs to proceed at once to Caesarea; and he addressed a powerful letter to the people of Caesarea, in which, while he apologised for addressing them since he was only the pastor of a poor and humble flock, he pressed upon them the fact that the choice of Basil was not only natural but necessary. These two letters went far to decide the election. Eusebius of Samosata, whose influence was great, hurried to the Cappadocian capital in spite of the severity of the winter, and immensely strengthened by his influence the party of Basil. The malcontent bishops wished to keep away the Bishop of Nazianzus, whose vigorous age and saintly straight-

forwardness they feared. But when the old man found that among all the other chorepiscopi three could not be found who were willing to join in the consecration of Basil, he determined to go in person as the third whose presence was demanded by the Nicene canon. He rose with difficulty from his bed of sickness, was conveyed to Caesarea in a litter, and carried out the ceremony. The defeated bishops held sullenly aloof, and were specially angry with the old man; but he rejoiced with all his heart at an event which he regarded as "the triumph of the Holy Spirit." He felt that to himself and to his son—who had assisted him throughout—the result was in large measure due, and, so far from being worn out by his journey, he returned almost rejuvenescent with heartfelt gratitude and joy.[1]

Basil had now attained the summit of his ambition. He was Archbishop of Caesarea. As Exarch of the diocese his sway extended over Pontus, Armenia, Galatia, Paphlagonia, and Bithynia. There were fifty chorepiscopi who owned allegiance to him as metropolitan.[2] The orthodox world rejoiced in his election, and he had the delight and honour to receive a letter of congratulation from the great Athanasius himself. Gregory indeed thought it best not to come in person to Caesarea, and at this Basil was inclined to take offence. He was pacified by the reasons which Gregory gave, and when his friend came he offered to make him his chief presbyter. This offer Gregory declined.

But Basil was very far from finding the throne of Caesarea a bed of roses. When Laud was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, and Strafford wrote to wish him many and happy days in his new office, he wrote back somewhat sadly. "Truly, my lord, I hope for neither; not for many, for I am in years and have had a troublesome life; not for happy, for I have no hope to do the good I desire. . . . And in truth, my lord, I have had a heaviness hanging over me ever since I was nominated to the place." The feelings of Basil were very similar to these. He writes to his brother: "I have entered into a life which wears away my body, and afflicts even my soul, because

[1] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xliii. 37: *νεὸς ἐπάνειστν, εὐσθένης, ἄνω βλέπων.*

[2] There were in the Empire thirteen dioceses, subdivided into 100 provinces (eparchies), which were again subdivided into smaller parishes (*παροικίαι*). The title of the head of a diocese was Exarch, Archbishop, or Patriarch; the head of an eparchy was a Metropolitan.

it exceeds my powers."[1] His troubles soon began. No sooner had Eusebius of Samosata left Caesarea than the bishops of Cappadocia came flocking back to it, eager if they could to reverse the election and to cover Basil with abuse and calumny. "Immediately after your departure," he writes to Eusebius, "our bishops showed themselves no better than we expected. They came upon me immediately, said and did many grievous things, and at last went away confirming their schism. Whether anything better will happen, and whether they will cease from their improbity, God only knows. My personal health is as feeble as ever."[2] "Everything here," he writes to Bishop Meletius even in 371, "is full of anguish, and my only cessation from troubles is the thought of your holiness."[3] He was charged with heterodoxy, charged with ingratitude to Dianius, and with many other faults. "We must leave all this to God," he says. Even in his sermons he could not refrain from bewailing the lack of unity. "The bees," he said, "fly in swarms, and do not begrudge each other the flowers. It is not so with us. We are not at unity. More eager about his own wrath than his own salvation, each aims his sting against his neighbour." Still more full of anguish is his letter to the monk Urbicius. "You were about to come to me," he says, "at least with the tip of your finger to refresh me, burning as I am in these temptations. For as in the waves one is dying away, and another rearing its crest, and another blackening with its ripple, so is it with my calamities. Some have ceased, and some are present, and some are expected; and I have but one remedy—to yield to the pressure, and to give way before my persecutors."[4]

It was a special source of grief to Basil that among his foes were they of his own household. His uncle Gregory, a Cappadocian bishop, was an avowed partisan of his opponents. Basil tried in vain to win him over, and regarded his opposition as a punishment for former sins. He wrote to him an eloquent and earnest letter, entreating him for the sake of a Church torn with dissension, to be at peace with him.[5] But meanwhile Basil had to endure a new humiliation. His brother, Gregory of Nyssa, scandalised at the quarrel between such near relatives, took a most extraordinary method of bringing about a reconciliation.

[1] *Ep.* lviii. *εἰς βίον παρήλθομεν συντρίβοντα μὲν ἡμῶν τὸ σῶμα, κακοῦντα δὲ καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν τῷ ὑπερβαίνειν τὴν ἡμετέραν δύναμιν.*

[2] *Ep.* xlviii. [3] *Ep.* lvii. [4] *Ep.* cxxiii. [5] *Ep.* lix.

He actually forged a letter in the name of his uncle containing overtures of peace, and carried it to his brother. Basil was filled with joy, and showed the letter to his friends; but when the news reached his uncle, he declared that he had never written at all. Then came a second letter purporting to be from his uncle, and brought by a servant of Gregory of Nyssa.[1] Anthimus, Bishop of Tyana, again informed Basil that this letter also was spurious. Then came another servant from Gregory of Nyssa with a third letter which Basil now saw at a glance to have been due to the same "pious fraud." Gregory of Nyssa had only acted in the innocence of his heart, combined with imperfect moral views and amazing ignorance of the world. A little amusement at the extraordinary simplicity of his brother must have mingled with the extreme sense of scandalised vexation with which Basil wrote to reproach him for his astonishing device.[2] Happily, however, the reconciliation of Basil with his uncle came about soon afterwards. He had striven with equal earnestness to win over to peace another and younger relative—Atarbius, Bishop of Neocaesarea.[3] The bishops gradually relaxed their hostility. If we accept the glowing picture of Gregory of Nazianzus, they came at last to Basil, changed their abuse into admiration, threw themselves at his feet, and recognised in him a patriarch, a legislator, and a judge.[4] It must, however, be feared from Basil's own letters that secret opposition continued for many years. As late as 373 he writes to Eusebius of Samosata that the excellent Bosporius helps him, but that, owing to sloth and jealousy, the friendship of the other bishops is only ostensible, and that they render him no assistance even in the most necessary things. This, he says, causes him such distress of mind, that the very excess of his grief prevents any complete recovery from the attacks of illness by which he is incessantly prostrated. In spite of all his efforts to win them over, they paralyse his action by leaving him single-handed in matters which the canons do not concede to isolated action. Hearing that he was dead, they had come flocking to Caesarea, and he had seized the opportunity of speaking to them; but he only received in return fair promises, which came to nothing

[1] It seems probable that Gregory was ordained Bishop of Nyssa in 371 after this event. Basil gives him the epithet *αἰδεσιμώτατον*, but this was sometimes given to presbyters.

[2] *Ep.* lviii.

[3] *Ep.* lxv.

[4] *Orat.* xliii. 40.

as soon as they had left him. He trusts to the prayers of Eusebius, and he means, in spite of all, to do his best. At a still later period he writes to some unnamed bishop: "You complain if you are not invited, and when you are invited you do not come. Your conduct in the second instance proves the emptiness of your complaint about the first. Again and again I entreat you to put up with me; and if you cannot tolerate me, at any rate do not neglect the martyrs in whose commemoration you are invited to participate. Grant this favour both to me and to them; but if you do not choose to do this, grant it at any rate to them, who are the more honourable."[1]

But opposition and calumny did not hinder Basil from a strenuous administration of his diocese. He at once took in hand a most necessary reform—the suppression of the bad practice of ordaining unworthy presbyters and deacons, and above all of ordaining them for money, under pretence of presents. In forbidding the presbyter Paregorius, though he was an old man of seventy, to live with his housekeeper, he struck a deadly blow at the scandal of the "female companions" (*Sub-introductae*). He reminds Paregorius of the Nicene canon, and bids him send the woman into a nunnery, and if he refuses immediate obedience, he threatens him with deposition and even with excommunication, which he also threatens to all who should then receive him.[2] He also took great part in the election of bishops, and endeavoured more and more to limit the choice of them to the bishops and clergy, leaving a mere ratification to the people and the magistrates.[3] He tried to enforce among the clergy an absolute celibacy and the same strictly ascetic life which he himself practised, in spite of the prostrated and ruined health of which it was the chief cause.

The year 371 was marked by his disastrous mistake in the case of Gregory Nazianzen. I have already narrated that incident, and here I need only refer to it. Valens, who was himself on his way to Caesarea, had decided on grounds nominally administrative, but perhaps in part from a desire to weaken Basil and strengthen Arianism,[4] to divide the unwieldy extent of Cappadocia into two provinces, Prima and Secunda. The Caesareans saw in the division a loss of their prestige, but in spite of Basil's best efforts he could

[1] *Ep.* cclxxxii. [2] *Ep.* lv. [3] *Ep.* ccxxx.
[4] Theodoret, *H. E.* v. 29.

procure nothing but the substitution of Tyana for Podandus as the capital of the new district.[1] Pondandus (still called *Podend*) was a wretched place, which Basil describes as a sort of Spartan Ceadas or Charonium, a pit breathing forth pestilential vapours; but, as far as his own peace was concerned, it would have been better for him that this should have been the new capital.

For Anthimus, Bishop of Tyana, an ambitious and energetic personage, at once claimed metropolitan jurisdiction over the new district, a claim which Basil vainly resisted, and after many annoyances was compelled to cede. Anthimus, supported by many old opponents of the Patriarch of Caesarea, took very high-handed measures, and did not even hesitate to intercept the revenues of the Church of Caesarea on the pretext that "revenues should not be paid *to heretics*." Gregory went to aid his friend, and at St. Orestes in the Taurus, on the confines of the two dioceses, the adherents of the rival bishops came into actual conflict. Gregory was wounded, and Basil's mules were seized.[2] To strengthen his cause, especially on the disputed marches, Basil appointed Gregory Bishop of Sasima, and in consequence added to all other troubles the pain caused him by the extreme embitterment of his friend. Gregory in later days felt a strong revival of his old friendship. He learnt to make allowance for an imperious will which was not actuated by selfish motives but by Basil's zeal for the Church—as represented, it is true, by his own authority—which swept aside all ordinary considerations. We need not recur to this unhappy story. Even Eusebius of Samosata was shocked by what Basil had done. Basil writes back that "he too could have wished his brother Gregory to rule a Church adequate to his nature. But this would have been the whole Church under the sun collected into one. Since then this is impossible, let him be a bishop who gives dignity to his see, and not one who gains his dignity from it. For it is the part of a truly great man not only to suffice for great things, but even by his own capacity to make little things great."[3] We feel that the excuse was far from adequate. It may be true that Gregory was morbidly fastidious, intensely sensitive, excessively self-conscious, and that his shrinking and poetic soul

[1] *Epp.* lxxiv. lxxv.
[2] See Life of Gregory, *supra*, i. 532.
[3] *Ep.* xcviii.

was too full of scruples and inquietude for the rough practical work of the world, but Basil of all persons ought to have known enough of his worth and of his character to refrain from inflicting on him a needless wound.

And, after all, Basil necessarily failed in this matter, for which he had been ready even to sacrifice the friend of his life. When Basil was dead Gregory, in appointing a new Bishop of Nazianzus, recognised Theodoret of Tyana as the rightful metropolitan. Basil himself felt that peace had become a matter of necessity if he was to carry on any of his wider work for the Church. The bishops of Cappadocia Secunda treated him as a stranger, and refused to come to his conferences.[1] At last, he made direct overtures to the Senate of Tyana to end the dispute. After speaking of peace as a Christian necessity according to the will of the Lord, he adds, "For all these reasons I pray to abide in peace during my remaining days, and that I may go to my last rest in peace. I have determined, therefore, to leave no labour, to shun no humble word or deed, to excuse myself from no journey however long, to decline no other burdensome course, if thereby I may obtain the reward of peace-making. Not even opposition in these courses will drive me to desist." A nominal reconciliation between Anthimus and Basil took place in 372, but it was again broken soon afterwards by Anthimus, who, in 373, consecrated to an Armenian see a person named Faustus, to whom Basil had refused consecration. Basil complains of this,[2] but the matter seems to have been settled amicably, for in the last allusion to Anthimus in the letters of Basil we find them of one accord in opposing Sabellian heresy.[3]

His kinsman Atarbius gave him further trouble. He abused and calumniated Basil in the open church, causing him deep anguish of mind; he declined to meet him at Nicopolis, where a synod was being held; and he taught Sabellianism. On these accounts Basil summons him to come and explain himself. What was the issue of the matter we do not know.

Another thorn in Basil's peace was Eustathius, Bishop of Sebaste in Armenia Minor. He was the very Proteus of fourth-century theology.[4] He began as an Arian, and in later life

[1] At the Council of Constantinople, however, all Cappadocia seems to have been represented by the Bishop of Caesarea.

[2] *Epp.* cxx. cxxii. [3] *Ep.* ccx. 5.

[4] "Les rapports orageux de Basile et d'Eustathe remplissent presque un tiers de la correspondance de Basile."—De Broglie, v. 121.

seems to have been driven hither and thither like a wandering cloud.[1] He signed many and widely-differing documents. The personal influence which he gained by his austerities and by his character was such that Basil speaks of him in the highest terms; yet his extravagance was condemned by the Council of Gangra (A.D. 358?), and at various times he was censured, banished, and even excommunicated. Ordained by Eulalius, he was soon deposed for wearing the philosopher's robe, not the ordinary clerical dress. Reordained in Caesarea as orthodox, he became at Constantinople "a coryphaeus of the Arians." Becoming in due time Bishop of Sebaste he had his share in the founding of monasticism, and won the temporary confidence of Basil.[2] After strange and complicated variations, he first signed and then repudiated the Semi-Arian creed of Rimini. He then seems to have adopted the Macedonian heresy, which denied the Divinity of the Holy Spirit. He professed great joy at Basil's elevation, but sent presbyters to him who turned out to be spies, and afterwards, to his deep distress, heaped upon him all sorts of calumnies, charging him with Apollinarianism and arrogance, and fomenting cabals against him.[3] At one time Basil thought that he had secured the orthodoxy of this waverer, for Eustathius signed a creed which he himself had drawn up. But when Arianism again came into power under Valens, Eustathius did his utmost to secure the favour of the Arians and to communicate with them, and having on an earlier occasion been recognised as orthodox by Liberius of Rome, he now pretended, to Basil's extreme indignation, that he was acting with the authority of that see.[4] Up till the time of Basil's death, in 379, the conduct of Eustathius continued to be to him a fertile source of misery; but strangely enough, when Eustathius died, in 381, he was succeeded by Peter of Sebaste, so that "Basil's brother was seated on the throne of Basil's most dangerous enemy."[5] But trials like these often made him ill. During the year 371 he lay for more than two months on the bed of sickness, afflicted with *insomnia* and loathing for all food.[6] In one most touching passage, written to Olympius, he confesses that he has been so much shaken by the conduct of Eustathius that he nearly incurred the sin of yielding to a temptation to give

[1] *Ep.* ccxliv. [2] *Ep.* ccxxiii. 3. [3] *Ep.* cxxx.
[4] *Ep.* cclxiii. [5] Tillemont, ix. 574. [6] *Ep.* cxxxviii.

up his trust in every one, and to hate and disbelieve in all mankind.[1]

Other annoyances came from fanatical monks. In his desperate attempt to induce Eustathius to be orthodox, Basil had already come into unpleasant relations with Theodotus, Metropolitan of Armenia; and in the same attempt he had professed that he would be content if Eustathius was willing to abide with the vague assertion of the Nicene Creed, "I believe in the Holy Ghost," and to confess merely that the Holy Spirit was not a created Being.[2] Basil himself was wholly free from the least sympathy with the heresy of Macedonius, who denied the full Divinity of the Spirit: but on the other hand he bore in mind that for a long period the faith of the Church on this subject had not been formulated; he wished, as Athanasius testified for him, to make himself weak with the weak; he did not wish to add another deadly source of quarrel to the already raging hatred of theological disputants. He therefore used varying forms of the doxology, sometimes saying, "Glory be to the Father, *with* the Son and the Holy Ghost," and sometimes, "By the Son *in* the Spirit." He shared the strong desire of Athanasius himself, not to exacerbate differences. He would have been content if the Macedonians admitted that the Holy Spirit was not created; if the Apollinarians would not press their error about the Incarnation; if the Sabellians would confess that there were Three Persons. But the monks were far from content with this "oeconomy" and condescension to the feeble. "Some," says Hooker, "because the light of his candle too much drowned theirs, were glad to lay hold on so colorable a matter, and were exceedingly forward to traduce him as the author of suspicious innovations." We have already related[3] the open attack made by a monk on the orthodoxy of Basil at a banquet, who said that his teaching about the Holy Spirit was like a river avoiding rocks to hide itself in the sands. Even the monks of Caesarea—ignorant of his motives, ignorant of his appeal to God that he might lose the Holy Spirit if he denied His Divinity, ignorant that in letters and conversations he had again and again expressed himself on this subject with perfect orthodoxy—murmured loudly and indignantly against him. He wrote to Gregory in a tone of vexation that he had no time to

[1] *Ep.* cxxxi. 2. [2] *Ep.* cxxv. [3] Life of Greg. Naz. *supra*, i. 540.

defend himself against these calumnies.[1] He was less pained by the utterance of such falsehoods than by the ready credence which they found among the brethren. It required nothing less than the frank and admiring *imprimatur* of his orthodoxy by the venerated Athanasius to silence the cabals against him. "I am astonished," wrote Athanasius to two presbyters of Tarsus, "at the temerity of those who dare to speak against our dear brother Basil, that true servant of God. This babbling (φλυαρία) is enough to show that they care not for the faith of the Fathers."[2] Finally, however, Basil was compelled to break his disdainful silence. At the request of Amphilochius, he threw to the winds the politic reserve which had been so fruitless, and wrote in 376 his treatise "On the Holy Spirit," in which he speaks against heretics of all descriptions with no uncertain sound.[3]

The dispute with Atarbius involved a painful separation from the Neocaesareans, with whom, from old association, he longed to be friendly. They, however, instigated by their bishop, refused communion with him. The founder of their see, Gregory Thaumaturgus, had written that "the Father and the Spirit were two in thought, but only one in substance," and the Neocaesareans interpreted this in a Sabellian sense. Persisting in this heresy, they also stormed against Basil for having introduced monasticism and a new style of psalmody. When he visited their neighbourhood to stay in his old Pontic retreat, they endeavoured to discredit him by dreams and revelations, and refused all his advances. He departed sadly from this region, deploring at once their stupidity and their rage.[4] "His friend Eustathius and his kinsman Atarbius made him cruelly expiate the wrongs he had inflicted on Gregory of Nazianzus."[5] He too had to feel what it was to be wounded in the house of his friends. There were times when he was so much troubled by the calumnies invented by his enemies, and believed by his friends, that he felt inclined to say in his haste, with the Psalmist, that "all men are liars." He tells one of his friends that after a severe illness he had no desire to recover, and wondered why God kept him alive.[6]

Yet during all this troubled time, and amid the calamities

[1] *Ep.* lxxi. οὔς γὰρ οὐκ ἔπεισεν ὁ μακρὸς χρόνος πῶς συμπείσει ἐπιστολὴ βραχεῖα ;
[2] Athanas. *Ep ad Joan. et Ant.*
[3] *Ep.* cxxxi. 2. *Ep.* ccxliii.
[4] *Ep.* ccx. (to the Neocaesareans).
[5] Fialon, p. 132.
[6] *Ep.* ccxliv. 8.

which came over him wave after wave, Basil was not neglecting his ordinary duties. He lived in simplicity and poverty, he preached and wrote, and managed the affairs of his diocese, lending a helping hand wherever it was needed. In his letters he consoled the penitent; he defended the cause of the widow; he loosed so far as he could the bands of civil oppression. There came on him daily the care of all the Churches.[1] In regulating the services of his own Church, he, like Ambrose at Milan, made improvements in the method of chanting.[2] He was specially careful in the selection of his clergy. Dorotheus says that once on visiting a monastery Basil enquired whether any one of the monks was specially endowed with the grace of obedience. One brother was pointed out to him, and he used his services at the meal. But when the monk brought him water to wash his hands, Basil said, "Come, and I will give you water for *your* hands." The monk held out his hands at once, and Basil poured water over them. Then Basil said to him, "When I have entered the sacrarium, come, and I will make you a deacon." This was done, and Basil then ordained him presbyter, and took him into his own diocese.[3]

The extraordinary story of the deacon Glycerius illustrates the aberrations due to the fermenting enthusiasm and speculative curiosity which marked the Eastern Church, and which were fostered by the dreamy idleness of innumerable monks. Glycerius was a young man whose early vigour Basil viewed with so much favour that he had ordained him deacon of the Church of Venesa (?) about 372. Puffed up by his ordination, the young deacon proceeded to gather round him a band of devoted young ladies, whose admiration he won by sleek and soft religious arts, and who supported him by their offerings. Severely reproved by his presbyter, his chorepiscopus, and lastly by Basil, Glycerius left the town by night with a band of these girls and some youths, and scandalised the country by wandering about with them in a disorderly manner, dancing and singing hymns, amid the jeers of the coarse rustics. When their fathers came to rescue the girls, Glycerius ignominiously drove them away. Finally the whole band took refuge with a bishop named Gregory, whom even the Benedictine editor is inclined to

[1] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xliii. 30-40. [2] *Ep.* ccvii. 3.
[3] Dorotheus, ch. 1.

think *may* have been Gregory of Nyssa.[1] Basil treated the vain, mischievous, and deluded deacon with much fatherly forbearance, and promised to deal with him kindly if he would dismiss the votaries whom he was leading, not to God, but to the abyss. Strange to say, the bishop, whoever he was, either failed to second Basil's efforts, or only did so in a lukewarm and inadequate way, and (so Basil hints) not from the best of motives.[2] If, however, he was the Bishop of Nyssa, the whole affair is another illustration of his curious simplicity and want of practical wisdom. How the affair ended we do not know. Basil closes the correspondence by saying that if Glycerius and his votaries resist his commands the responsibility must rest with others, not with him.[3]

[1] He personally inclines to think it was Gregory of Nazianzus, but this seems to me incredible. See *Vita S. Basilii* (*Opp.* iii. p. cxxxix).

[2] *Ep.* clxviii.

[3] Our only authority for this sad business is the letters of Basil (*Epp.* clxix.-clxxi., *Opp.* iii. 258-260), who felt it deeply, and says to Gregory *μαρτυρόμεθά σοι δ καὶ Θεῷ καὶ ἀνθρώποις ὅτι μὴ καλῶς ταῦτα γίνεται.*

XIII

Continued

BASIL AND VALENS

"Ἐπὶ ἡγεμόνων καὶ βασιλέων σταθήσεσθε ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ."—MARK xiii. 9.

SECTION IV

THERE is always a fascination in the narratives which tell us how "the irresistible might of weakness shook the world"; how the spiritual power in all its apparent impotence faced and overawed the plenitude of imperial despotism. The Scripture scenes which show us how Elijah confronted Ahab and Jezebel, how Isaiah rebuked Ahaz, how Jeremiah withstood Jehoiachim, how John the Baptist denounced the sin of Herod, how Paul faced the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem and Nero at Rome, are repeated in the stories of Ignatius before Trajan, of Ambrose repelling Theodosius from the Basilica of Milan, of Basil confronting Valens, of Leo I. meeting Attila, of Columban rebuking Thierry II., of Gregory VII. shaming the terrified Henry IV. at Canossa, of Huss forcing the burning blush to the cheeks of Sigismund, of Luther before the Diet of Worms.

While the Church of the East was rent by the internal dissensions of which Basil so bitterly complains, it ran a terrible risk of relapsing once more into the Arianism against which the decision of Nice had hitherto been the strongest bulwark; for between A.D. 337 and 378 Arianism was practically the State religion of the East. When we read the varying phases of opinion and counter-signatures to opposing documents which discredit the life of Eustathius of Sebaste, we cannot but pity the difficulties which beset many minds in those days of uncer-

tainty and vacillation, when every footfall seemed to stir up the dust of new heresies. The new leaven of Christianity was still fermenting in the old leather wineskins of Paganism. Upon unstable souls, wavering like a wave of the sea, the winds of new doctrine beat with terrible force. Everywhere there was an intemperate curiosity, a rage for novelty, a passion for speculation and dispute, "All the world dogmatised—the priest in his chair, the scholar in his closet, the idler in the market-place, the workman in his shop." There was no question so arduous but what it was a subject of hot counter-discussions among the Eastern populace. Everybody thought himself infallible. Jerome complains that there was not even an infatuated old woman who did not think herself quite competent to explain the most difficult passages of Scripture. Men of the least instructed class became the founders of schisms and heresies. Slaves and sailors, as Gregory of Nazianzus complains, were made bishops. Macedonius, Patriarch of Constantinople, denied that the Holy Ghost was God. Aetius, originally a slave and a tinker, became a strong heresiarch. The creed of Rimini, "that colourless expression of an equivocal belief," was a powerful weapon in the hands of all who favoured the views of Constantius and Valens. Gregory of Nyssa gives us a picture at once interesting and distressing of the theological disquisitions of the Byzantine tradesmen.[1]

"In old days," says Hilary of Poictiers, the word of the Lord . . . "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," sufficed for believers. But we are being compelled by the faults of heretics and blasphemers to do things unlawful, to climb steeps, to speak out things ineffable, to assume things unconceded."[2] The pendulum of orthodox reaction often swung into an opposite heresy. The defenders of the Nicene faith often seemed to pass over into the borders of Sabellianism or Apollinarianism.[3] Frightful heresies were sometimes supposed to lurk in the most innocent variation of a formula, or in the mere fact that two terms for substance (*Ousia* and *Hypostasis*) were regarded by some as identical and by others as different. In Latin these words were only translatable by the one word *substantia*—a word so purely philosophical that it requires a trained mind in order not to attach to it a meaning the most

[1] See *supra*, i. 547. [2] *De Trinit.* ii. 1.
[3] See Aug. *op. Imperf.* v. 25; Hilar. *De Synod.* 67.

diametrically opposite to its real significance. Of some leading bishops and theologians—as, for instance, Marcellus of Ancyra—it has always remained a subject of dispute whether they were heretics or not. "Frequently," says Duns Scotus, "the saints in extinguishing heresies which were springing up against them, have used exaggerated language, wishing to decline to the opposite extreme."[1] "Just judgment has perished," says Basil. "Every one walks by the will of his own heart; wickedness is immeasurable; the people are lawless; their religious leaders have no boldness of speech. Already the pretended defence of orthodoxy has been devised by some as a weapon of mutual warfare, and while they carefully conceal their private enmities, they pretend that they only hate each other on behalf of piety. . . . It is an internecine war. . . . The unbelieving laugh at these things; those of little faith are shaken; faith becomes ambiguous; ignorance spreads itself over men's souls, because those who enslave the Scriptures with evil intent imitate the truth."[2]

While such was the state of things, while there was heard on all sides "a concert of recriminations,"[3] while the entire populations of cities fluctuated with their bishops, while Eunomians were prevalent in Asia Minor, and Apollinarians in Syria, it may easily be seen that the triumph of Arianism was far from impossible. Athanasius was dead, and might seem to have lived in vain. A persecuting Arian sat on the throne of the Eastern world. Valens, a prince "rude without vigour, and feeble without mildness," was completely under the influence of the subtle Eudoxius, the Arian or Semi-Arian patriarch of his capital. Valentinian had tried to rule without the Church; Valens tried to rule in spite of it. But the defiant neutrality of the one and the stupid hostility of the other alike failed. At Antioch, Edessa, Jerusalem, and many other places, the faithful were indeed dispersed or oppressed, but at Caesarea, Alexandria, Milan, and Rome—thanks to a Basil, an Athanasius, an Ambrose, and an Innocent—the monarch's sceptre had to be lowered before the bishop's staff.[4]

Under these circumstances, Basil became a new Athanasius, and did much to prevent the ruin of the faith.

Basil was never able to be on good terms with the court of

[1] *Quaest. in Lombard*, ii. *dist.* 33, quoted by Gieseler, i. 380.
[2] *Ep.* xcii. 2. [3] As at Tarsus, Nicopolis, Nyssa, Sebaste, Neocaesarea, etc.
[4] De Broglie, v. iii.

Constantinople. Like a true Greek, he cared more for his city than for the Empire, and great events like the defeat of Julian, the disgraceful treaty of Jovian, the revolt of Procopius, the ravages of the Goths, leave scarcely a ripple on his pages. Of Constantius, either in anger or in disdain for his proceedings, he says nothing. He rejected the advances and opposed the plans of Julian,[1] who wreaked his vengeance on Caesarea by compelling it to resume the name of Mazaca, spoiling its churches, and putting to death, for their share in destroying the Temple of Fortune, the two young patricians, Eupsychius and Damas, whom thenceforth Basil yearly honoured as martyrs.[2] When Jovian's short reign of eight months ended, Valentinian, elected by the army in 364, summoned his brother Valens to rule the East. Valens, surrounded by eunuchs and Arian bishops, was sincere in his convictions. He had resisted Julian on behalf of his belief, and would have been a man of commonplace but respectable character had not his timidity made him a despot and his religious convictions a persecutor. Without being bloodthirsty he was inexorable, cowardly, and cruel.[3] He inspired universal contempt. Even the mob of Constantinople openly reproached him, and from the walls of Chalcedon the inhabitants contemptuously called him *Sabaiarius*, or "small-beer drinker."[4] Constantius had been the protector of Arianism; Valens became its apostle. In the space of eight years "four sovereigns and two religions had rapidly and violently succeeded each other on the throne."[5]

In 365 Valens had started towards Asia Minor, but had been recalled by the revolt of Procopius. In 371 he visited Bithynia and Galatia on a sort of Arian crusade, and it was in that year that he had ordered the division of Cappadocia which so greatly troubled Basil. He was accompanied by two principal supporters —the Praefect Modestus and Demosthenes the groom of the bed-chamber. Modestus, Count of the East, had been a cruel inquisitor under Constantius, had sacrificed to idols under Julian, and had been reconverted into the position of a baptized Arian by Valens, who by way of reward had made him Praetorian Praefect. Demosthenes was a eunuch and a *chef de cuisine*.

[1] This seems to be admitted, though the letters of Julian printed in Basil's works are clearly spurious (*Opp.* iii. 122, 123).

[2] *Epp.* cc. cclii.

[3] Fialon, p. 166. Ammianus (xxxi. 14) describes him as "Cessator et piger subagrestis ingenii, nec bellicis nec liberalibus studiis eruditus."

[4] *Sabaia*, "small beer," was a common drink in Pannonia. Niebuhr, *Lectures*, iii. 33.

[5] De Broglie, *L'Égl. et l'Emp.* v. 6.

After he had won over Galatia by willing submission, and Bithynia by force, Valens sent Modestus in 372 to Caesarea, having been goaded on by his advisers to break down the power of Basil, who was felt to be the chief bulwark of the Nicene faith. Modestus arrived with an escort of Arian bishops at whose head stood Euippius, a personal friend of Basil. Some of the friends of Basil counselled flight, but with a truer sense of duty he stayed and braved the storm. He refused to communicate with the Arian bishops, and when he saw them assembled round his episcopal seat at the feast of the martyr Eupsychius, he preached with a calmness and moderation which scandalised the monks, but gave no handle to his adversaries.[1]

An ordinary man might well have trembled before so purpureal and unscrupulous a personage as the all-powerful Praefect. When Eudoxius died in 370 the assembled clergy of Constantinople elected in his place the presbyter Evagrius, and sent a deputation of no less than eighty ecclesiastics to inform Valens of their choice. He was then at Nicomedia, and he not only received the deputation with extreme hauteur, but—if the story be true—ordered Modestus that they should all be put to death. At so tremendous an order even Modestus trembled, and only ventured to carry out his instructions by a secret artifice. He placed the eighty ecclesiastics on board ship as though to send them into exile, and gave secret instructions to the sailors to set the ship on fire. The horrible commission was executed in the Gulf of Aztaca, on which Nicomedia stands. The sailors escaped in a boat; the burning ship was wrecked at a port named Decidizus, on the coast of Bithynia, and the miserable prisoners perished.[2] In place of Evagrius the soldiers of Valens compelled the election and enthronisation of Demophilus, Bishop of Beroea, the man who had helped to entangle Pope Liberius in the fatal concessions to heresy which were the sole blot on his career.

Such were the antecedents of Modestus, who, in all the arrogance of his immense power, summoned Basil before his tribunal. "Basil," he exclaimed with insolent familiarity, refusing him his title of bishop, "what do you mean by so daring a defiance of such great power, and by standing alone in such wilful audacity?"

[1] Sozom. v. 4.

[2] Socr. *H. E.* iv. 14-16; Sozom. *H. E.* vi. 13, 14. Happily the story is open to very considerable doubt. Modestus may have been "aptus ad haec et similia" (Amm. Marc. xix. 12), but the silence of the other authorities tells strongly against it. Perhaps *one* was burnt (Greg. Naz. *Or.* xxv. 10).

"What is your meaning?" answered Basil, "and what contumacy have I shown?" "All the rest," said the Praefect, "have yielded and been put down; you alone refuse the religion of the Emperor." "It is not the will of my Emperor," said the bishop. "I cannot endure to worship any created thing, being as I am God's creation, and having been bidden to be a God." "What do you think of us then?" retorted Modestus. "Are we nothing?" "You are a Praefect," said Basil, "and one of the illustrious, but you are not to be more honoured than God."

Enraged by his opposition, the Praefect started from his seat and began to address him in rougher tones. "What? do you not fear my power?" "Why should I fear it," answered Basil; "what can happen to me?" "What? any one of the many things which are in my power," said Modestus. "As for instance?" asked Basil. "Confiscation, banishment, tortures, death?" replied the Praefect. "Is that all?" said Basil; "none of those things affect me. He who has nothing is not liable to confiscation, unless you want to seize these worn and threadbare clothes and a few books which constitute my entire possessions. Banishment? I know nothing of it. I am confined to no spot. The land which I now inhabit is not mine, and any land into which I may be cast forth is all mine, or rather is all God's, in which I am but a stranger and a pilgrim. Tortures? I have no body to torture, except perhaps for a single stroke, for that alone is in your power. And as for death, death is a benefactor, for it will send me all the sooner to God, to whom I live and whom I serve."

"No one has ever addressed Modestus so," exclaimed the astonished Praefect, "or with such bold confidence." "Perhaps," answered Basil, "you never met a bishop before, otherwise he would certainly have spoken in this way while contending for such issues. In all other matters, Praefect, we are reasonable and humbler than any one, as is our duty, nor do we show arrogance to any one, however low, much less to so great a power. But where God is at stake we despise all else, and look to Him alone; and fire, and sword, and wild beasts, and nails which rend the flesh, are to us a luxury rather than a terror. So then insult, threaten, do what you will, enjoy your power. Let the Emperor, too, hear this. For you will not persuade me to make a league with impiety even should you threaten things yet more terrible."

Modestus knew enough of the world to see that it would be in every way dangerous to treat such a man with violence. Returning to the Emperor as speedily as possible, he said, "Emperor, we have been worsted by the bishop of this Church. He is superior to threats, too firm for arguments, too strong for persuasion. We must try one of the more ignoble. This man will never yield to menaces, or to anything but open force."[1] Before finally giving up the attempt, however, he did his best to persuade Basil to give up the single word *Homoousios*, "consubstantial," promising him that in that case the Emperor would enter into his communion. "It is much," answered Basil, "to save the soul of an Emperor; but, far from being able to add or subtract a single word from the creed, I may not even alter the order in which it stands." Unwilling to give up his point, Modestus said, "I will give you till to-morrow to think the matter over." "To-morrow," answered Basil, "you will find me exactly what I am to-day."[2]

Modestus confessed himself beaten, and respected his conqueror; but Valens would not give up the attempt. He sent Count Terentius, the conqueror of Procopius, to try the effect of flattery; and shortly afterwards the eunuch Demosthenes. Demosthenes had been very successful in Galatia, and, thinking that he could manage Basil in the same way, he invited him to a discussion, but Basil recommended him to attend to his own business. He summoned Basil before a court of justice, and there, in the presence of Modestus, rudely threatened him with the sword. Basil smiled with disdain alike at his arguments and at his menaces, and perhaps told him to go back to his kitchen fire.[3] The man who had not recoiled before a Julian would hardly be likely to quail before a cook.

Half in admiration and half in alarm, Valens now confined his requisition to the single point that Basil should admit the Arians to his communion. This also Basil of course inflexibly refused, and, to overawe him into submission, the Emperor at last came in person. He presented himself in the church of Caesarea at Epiphany 372, accompanied by his escort of spear-bearers. No special notice was taken of his entrance, and he seated himself

[1] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xliii. 48-51.

[2] Theodoret, iv. 17; Greg. Nyss. *c. Eunom.* i. 312.

[3] Theodoret, iv. 19. Gregory says (*Orat.* xliii. 47): *τὸν ἀρχιμάγειρον Ναβουζάρδαν τὰς ἐκ τῆς τέχνης μαχαίρας ἐπαπειλοῦντα καὶ τῷ οἰκείῳ πυρὶ πεμπόμενον.*

among the throng of the laity. The scene was one to which he was wholly unaccustomed.[1] The people, pressing on each other like the waves of the sea, were thundering forth the psalms for the day, but all was done in perfect order. Behind the altar, facing the people—as was the custom in that day—stood the tall and stately figure of Basil, immovable as a statue, and showing neither by look nor sign that he was in any way conscious of the Emperor's presence.[2] On his finger gleamed the episcopal ring, the crosier was in his hand, over his shoulders flowed the white pallium embroidered with its four crosses. His beard was long and white, his face thin but of noble lineaments, his ardent gaze was fixed on the holy table. Round him in reverend order stood his presbyters, looking more like angels than men. The fervour of devotion and the beauty of holiness reigned throughout the assembly, and the timid and conscientious Valens was so struck with awe by the spectacle that his head swam and his eyes grew dim. When he came forward to present his offering his emotion became visible to all. None of the presbyters came to receive it. Would Basil accept it, or would he put him to shame before the whole congregation? Valens tottered, and was on the point of falling heavily to the ground, when one of the presbyters caught him in his arms.

Basil accepted his offering, and after the service admitted him to an interview within the curtain of the sacrarium. The conversation turned on solemn questions of the faith. Valens was a respectful if not a convinced listener, but when "the incorrigible eunuch," who had the misfortune to consider himself a great theologian, thrust himself into the discussion, and was guilty of some gross solecism, Basil, turning to him with a smile, crushed him with the observation, "Here, it seems, we have a Demosthenes who cannot speak Greek; he had better attend to his sauces." The Emperor was amused, and the interview left on his mind so favourable an impression that he gave to the poor the income of his estates in the district of Cappadocia.[3]

[1] Greg. Naz. xliii. 52.

[2] When the Pope is the celebrant at great ceremonies in Rome he still stands facing the people behind the altar. This is also the case in the Church at Ravenna, in S. Ambrogio at Milan, in Norwich Cathedral, and elsewhere. See Bingham, viii. 6, sec. 11.

[3] These events are related substantially in unison, but with differing details, in Greg. Nyss. *in Eunom.* i.; Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xliii.; Rufin. ii. 9; Theodoret, iv. 19; Socr. iv. 26. The allusions in Basil's letters are slight, see *Epp.* cxx. cxxiii. cxxix.

But Valens was always at the mercy of the last speaker, and when he once more found himself among his Arian followers, it was not difficult for them to persuade him that there would be no peace in the Church till he had banished Basil. The order was given, and to avoid tumults it was to be carried out at night. Basil was prepared to obey, and simply ordered a single attendant to follow him with his tablets. The chariot stood ready at the door, and Basil's friends—Gregory among them—were prepared to follow him. His fate might have been that which afterwards befell Chrysostom, but for the sudden illness of Galates, the only son of Valens, a boy of six years old. The Empress Dominica saw in the child's sickness a sign of God's displeasure at the threatened exile, and at her entreaty Basil was sent for. He prayed for the child on the condition that if he recovered he should be baptized by a Catholic bishop. The child grew better, but Valens was reminded that he had promised Eudoxius, the Arian bishop by whom he had been baptized, that he should baptize his son also. The boy was baptized by an Arian and died. Once more, if we can trust the Church historians, Valens determined to sign the decree of exile, but the pen split three times in his trembling hands, and made no mark on the paper. He abandoned his ill-omened attempt, and left Basil absolute master of the situation.[1]

Not long afterwards Basil pacified still more completely the formidable Praefect. Modestus fell into a dangerous illness, and in the agonies of his pain sent for Basil. "Accept my apology," he cried; "grant me deliverance." He recovered, and attributed his cure to the prayer of Basil, to whom he henceforth became so firmly attached that no less than six times Basil appealed to him on behalf of different friends.[2] These were but a few of the requests which Basil made to leading personages on behalf of the aged, of widows, of the poor, of monks, and of whole districts.[3] On behalf of criminals he never interfered.[4] When, however,

It must be remembered that the conveyance of letters along roads haunted by spies, deserters, and brigands was not free from danger. Letters often failed to reach their destination; see *Ep.* ccxxxvii.

[1] I omit the miraculous story of Zonaras about the visit of Basil to Nicæ.

[2] *Epp.* 104, 110, 111, 279, 280, 281. Of these *Ep.* 104 requests that priests and their households should be exempt from poll-tax; 110 is an appeal for the tax-burdened mountaineers of Taurus; 111 is an appeal for mercy towards a friend; 279 and 280 are recommendatory of a citizen of Tyana and of a relative; 281 a request for Helladius.

[3] *Epp.* 84, 107, 108, 142, 284, 285.

[4] *Ep.* cclxxxix.

Basil praises the "incomparable magnanimity" of Modestus was he ignorant of, or had he forgotten, or did he disbelieve the dreadful story about the murder of the eighty presbyters of Constantinople in their burning ship?

Basil soon gave another conspicuous instance of his boldness in confronting the civil power. Eusebius, the Praefect of Pontus, uncle of the Empress, was his deadly enemy, and omitted no opportunity of calumniating him. His assessor wished to marry by force a young and noble widow,[1] who, to avoid his tyranny, took refuge in the sanctuary of Basil's church. Eusebius, by virtue of his plenipotentiary authority, demanded her extradition; but Basil, proclaiming the inviolability of the sanctuary, refused to give her up. To add insult to injury, the Praefect sent some magistrates to search Basil's house, in order to give colour to the insinuation that the lady was there concealed for immoral purposes.[2] He then summoned Basil before his tribunal and brutally threatened to tear out his liver. "Do so," said Basil; "it gives me much trouble where it is."[3] But the people, who were devoted to Basil, rose in a tumult to save him. Conspicuous among them were the armourers and imperial weavers, and the mob hastily armed themselves with torches, sticks, stones, and any weapon that came first to hand. The terrified Praefect was reduced to the ignominy of imploring personal protection at the hands of his prisoner. The widow was saved, and took the veil in the monastery of Macrina.

It need not, however, be supposed from these incidents that Basil passed his whole life in tragedies and thunderstorms. His 400 letters — which are far more really letters and less of treatises than those of Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine—often have a great charm of playfulness. Even with civil governors he could interchange a delightful banter. When he heard from the Governor of Cappadocia that he had been cured of an illness by pickled cabbage, he writes to say that henceforth he shall rank the merits of pickled cabbage with those of the lotos-fruit of which Homer sang, nay, even with the ambrosial food of the gods. "You are right," replies the governor. "The proverb says, 'Cabbage twice is death'—but cabbage many times is health. Come and dine with me to-morrow on pickled cabbage—that and nothing else." There is no great wit in these little

[1] Perhaps the Vestiana mentioned by Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. S. Macrin.*
[2] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xliii. 156, 157. [3] Greg. Nyss. *in Basil.*

genial notes, but they may help to show us that the life of these great heroes and confessors was not always lived at high pressure; that in due season they could laugh, and jest, and unbend their minds, and forget their cares.

Safe at length from violence, Basil determined to build a magnificent church, clergy-house, and hospital.[1] The size and splendour of these buildings excited envy,[2] and Basil's many enemies, unable openly to crush him, did their best to thwart and to annoy. They laid a complaint before Helias, the governor of the province, that Basil was ambitiously aiming at popularity. Basil simply replies that his work is useful, and had received the Emperor's approval.[3] As to this and other accusations he advises Helias to imitate the Alexandrian judge who, on hearing a friend calumniated, covered one ear with his hand to imply that before believing it he means to hear the other side. It was in a part of this hospital that Basil received lepers, embracing them and calling them his brothers. "What," asks Gregory, "will they say to this who lay to his charge his pride and his arrogance?"[4] He established similar hospitals on a smaller scale throughout his diocese.[5]

Basil had not yet quite done with the eunuch Demosthenes. That extraordinary personage reappeared in a civil capacity at Caesarea, and there took upon himself to form cabals against Basil, composed of all the discontented ecclesiastics of every city in the province. Not daring to attack Basil in person, he inflicted the deepest wound he could by securing the deposition of his younger brother Gregory from the bishopric of Nyssa on frivolous charges of uncanonical appointment and maladministered revenues. Gregory was arrested and banished into Bithynia, and Demosthenes tried to convene a council and depose him from his office. Basil, compelled to take action, wrote a firm and warning letter to Demosthenes, and he disappeared from Cappadocia.[6] But Gregory of Nyssa was still in exile, and an Arian had been put in his place, whom Basil describes as "a slave, only worth a few pence, but as emulous a promoter of heresy as those who appointed him."[7] Basil himself remained victorious and unassailable.

[1] Πτωχοτροφεῖον. [2] They were even called "The New City."
[3] *Ep.* xciv. [4] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xliii. 63. [5] *Epp.* cxlii., cxliii.
[6] *Ep.* ccxxv. [7] *Ep.* ccxxxix. *ἀνδράποδον ὀλίγων ὀβολῶν ἄξιον.*

XIII

Continued

BASIL'S LABOURS FOR THE CHURCH IN GENERAL

"Καισαρέων μεγ' ἄεισμα φαάνταται ὦ Βασίλειε
Βροντὴ σεῖο λόγος, ἀστεροπὴ δὲ βίος."
GREG. NAZ. *Epitaph S. Basil.*

SECTION V

THE records of Basil's activity become still more astonishing when we bear in mind that his labours were constantly saddened by troubles and hindered by chronic illness. His life in later years might almost be described as "a long disease." He often preached, and that before extremely suspicious and even hostile audiences, when he could scarcely utter a few words without painful effort. Abused, misunderstood, often insulted to his face, in the cities through which he passed he confronted his trials with an indomitable spirit, if often with a heavy heart. The calumnies directed against himself he freely forgave; the bitterness of personal enmity he met with perfect humility; it was only in matters pertaining to the faith that he was inflexible. No unkindness quenched his sympathies. No ingratitude drove him to relax his efforts. At one time he tried the remedy of hot baths, but laughs at himself for forgetting the proverb "that hot baths do not benefit the dead."[1] His letters abound in expressions of distress for mental trouble and physical weakness. "What," he writes to his friend Ascholius, Bishop of Thessalonica, "what is the state of our fortunes? Love has grown cold. The doctrine of our fathers is laid waste. There are many shipwrecks of the faith. The mouths of the pious are silent."[2] Again and

[1] *Ep.* cxxxvii. [2] *Ep.* clxiv.

again he has to fall back, as all good men must fall back, on hope in God as the only thing in which he can find the least support.

As Basil was the founder of the most moderate and sensible of monastic institutions and the author, conjointly with Gregory, of those rules of monastic life which have received the greatest sanction from experience, so too he has the high honour of being one of the ablest writers of liturgies. It is of course difficult to ascertain the exact amount of his share in the two or three different forms of liturgy in Coptic, Greek, and Armenian, which pass under his name; but the single fact that throughout the East, from Constantinople to Alexandria, his name was attached to the form of prayers which was generally current is sufficient to show the powerful effect of the reform which he introduced.[1] The chief object of his reform seems to have been a separation of the offices common to all the faithful from those which were specially reserved for the clergy. He abbreviated the ordinary public prayers while he developed those of the ministry. He consulted the weakness of the general congregations, and relied on the fervour of the chosen presbyters. He rendered the liturgy more easy for those who were distracted by the necessary duties of the world while he purposely occupied the time of the clergy in order to keep them from secular occupations. Hence the Basilian liturgy is far larger than its predecessors, and the prayers, instead of being short and childlike, are often rhetorical and philosophic.[2]

We have already seen the profound impression produced on the mind of Valens by the order and solemn grandeur of the services of the Church in Caesarea. They produced a yet deeper impression on the mind of a person very different from Valens—the celebrated solitary Ephraem Syrus. He narrated the story that one day, when he was passing through a city of Cappadocia—the name of the city was nothing to one who was wholly indifferent to the world—he heard a voice which said to him, "Rise, Ephraem, and come feed on thoughts." "Where shall I find them, Lord?" he asked. "Go towards My house," answered the voice, "and there thou shalt find a royal (*basileion*) vase full

[1] See on liturgies, Palmer, *Orig. Liturg.* i. 45-72; Neale, *Eastern Church*, i. 317, ii. ch. vi.; and *Dict. of Christian Antiquities*.

[2] See further De Broglie, v. 140-142. Basil's liturgy, now used in the Eastern Church, is modified from that of St. James. Basil's three important canonical epistles, addressed to Amphilochius of Iconium on matters of discipline, belong to the years 374 and 375.

of the nourishment that suits thee." He went towards the church, and from the vestibule saw on the steps of the altar a priest speaking to the people, on whose shoulder, whispering into his ear, sat a snow-white dove. Then he understood that he was in Caesarea, and was listening to the voice of Basil. "I saw him," he says, "this vessel of election, standing in sight of all his flock, adorned and enriched with words majestic as precious jewels, and the assembly seemed to me all resplendent with the Divine splendour of grace. Transported with enthusiasm, he lifted his voice in Syriac, the only language which he could speak. "Who is this?" asked the people. "It is some mendicant come to beg of the bishop." But Basil had observed him, and ordered him to be led to him. When the sermon was over he asked, "Are not you the Syrian Ephraem, of whose love for solitude I have heard?" "Yes," answered the old man, "I am that Ephraem, who have only known how to wander from the path which leads to heaven."[1] They interchanged friendly words, marked by the deepest humility on the part of the Syrian saint, and they remained friends and correspondents until death.

The one thing for which Basil most passionately yearned was the unity of the Church, and to secure this was the object most prominent in his mind during his whole episcopate. We have already seen how he tried to secure peace and unity throughout the farthest limits of his own diocese; how he went to the extreme of economic condescension to the difficulties of the weak; how he shared the willingness of Athanasius to insist as little as was absolutely necessary for the purity of the faith on special formulae; and we have also seen how distressing was the failure caused partly by the defection of Galatia, partly by the unfitness and envy of many bishops, especially of Atarbius and Eustathius. Unhappily he was no less unsuccessful during his own lifetime in putting an end to the scandal of schism, and securing the peace and grandeur of the orthodox Church.

As early as 371 he endeavoured to carry out the great and statesmanlike plan which he had set before him. It was to win over heretics as far as possible by minor concessions and by forbearance; and to unite in one imposing body the orthodox bishops of the East and the West in one great General Council, whose decisions should be sufficiently unanimous to induce Valen-

[1] Ephraem, *Orat. in Basil*, p. 723; Greg. Nyss. *De S. Ephrem;* Sozom. iii. 16; De Broglie, v. 183.

tinian to check the Arian persecutions of his brother Valens. He could be sure from the first of the co-operation of Melitius of Antioch and Eusebius of Samosata; but his great desire was to enlist the powerful aid of Athanasius, and so first of all to put an end to the ruinous scandal of the schism of Antioch.

We have already seen the sad state of things in the city in which the disciples were first called Christians. It had three Patriarchs: an Arian, the orthodox Paulinus, and the gentle Meletius, who was also orthodox, but was too mild and too little of a partisan for extreme controversialists. Basil and the Eastern Church in general were convinced of the absolute right and the perfect fidelity of Meletius; but unfortunately the too impetuous Lucifer of Cagliari had consecrated Paulinus, and his claims were supported by Damasus at Rome and Athanasius at Alexandria. Ever since this rash act of Lucifer "the schism had not only smoked but flamed out, each party striving to advance its interest and to suppress the other."

The first letter of Basil to Athanasius[1] was an earnest and powerful appeal for help in restoring to the Church her old love and her old power. It was carried to Alexandria by Dorotheus, a presbyter of Antioch, and did not mention Meletius by name. This Basil did in his second letter,[2] and Athanasius delayed his decision until he should have heard a report of the state of things from a special messenger, his presbyter Peter, whom he sent to Antioch to gain information. As this involved a long delay, Basil decided to send Dorotheus at once to Rome and the Italian bishops. In 372 he sent a letter to the West signed by thirty-two bishops. He wrote a letter to Damasus,[3] pervaded by the same earnestness as those to Athanasius. But nothing in the whole plan turned out well. The first answer which he received from Rome was vague and useless.[4] Unfortunately neither Athanasius nor Meletius would take the first step towards mutual reconciliation. If either of them could have persuaded himself to do so the Meletian schism would probably have come to a happy end. Dorotheus returned from Rome without any definite answer from Pope Damasus, but accompanied by Sabinus, a Roman presbyter, who went back with yet more

[1] *Ep.* lxvi. [2] *Ep.* lxvii. [3] *Ep.* lxviii.

[4] "The Western prelates sat quiet and warm at home, and cared not to burn their fingers in such a troublesome fire, especially at that distance . . . and therefore left them to scuffle it out and end the matter as well as they could."—Cave, ii. 246.

pressing letters to the bishops of Italy. This gave offence to Damasus, who expected that the appeal should be made direct to himself. But Basil never acknowledged the asserted supremacy of the see of St. Peter. He complains bitterly of the "arrogance and superciliousness of the West."[1] He did not indeed go so far as the members of the Council of Constantinople, who treated the Western bishops as "strangers"; nor did he accept the absurd arguments that the East ought to have supremacy because the sun rises in the east, and because Christ lived in Palestine! But to him the East and the West were brothers, as they had been to Dianius, who was one of those who, at the Council of Antioch, firmly repudiated the pretensions of Pope Julius. The relations between the Churches grew more and more strained. Jerome went so far as to say that in the Eastern Church there were only three orthodox bishops—Athanasius, Paulinus, and Epiphanius.[2] In 375 Dorotheus pressed Basil to let Gregory of Nyssa accompany him to Rome. But Basil refused. "My brother," he wrote, "is, I know, entirely inexperienced in the affairs of the Church. By a man of right disposition his intercourse would be highly valued; but what benefit to the common interests would accrue from the society of such a man—whose character is entirely alien from servile flattery—to a lofty and sublime personage who sits somewhere up on high, and on that account is unable to hear those who speak the truth to him from the ground beneath him (*χαμόθεν*)!"[3] In a later letter to Eusebius of Samosata he says that Dorotheus is to be accompanied by the presbyter Sanctissimus, but he does not at all know what sort of letters he ought to write to the West. "It occurs to me," he says, "to exclaim with Diomede in Homer. Would you had not entreated; the man is lordly![4] For when haughty characters are treated with respect it is their nature to become still more disdainful. If God be merciful to us, what other assistance do we need? If the wrath of God abide on us, what help is there for us from the arrogance of the West? They neither know the truth, nor care to learn it; but, prejudiced by false suspicions, they act as they did before in the case of Marcellus. They were jealous of those who told them the truth, and by their own action confirmed the heresy. I myself wished

[1] To Eusebius of Samosata. *Ep.* ccxxxix. 2: *ποία βοήθεια ἡμῖν τῆς Δυτικῆς ὀφρύος;* [2] *Ep.* xxxviii., *ad Pammachium.* [3] *Ep.* ccxv.
[4] *Il.* ix. 695: *μηδ ὄφελες λίσσεσθαι . . . ὁ δ' ἀγήνωρ ἐστὶ καὶ ἄλλως.*

to write a letter to the coryphaeus of them[1] out of the ordinary form, not about ecclesiastical concerns, but merely to hint that they neither know the real state of affairs among us, nor follow the road by which they might learn it; and to tell them that they ought not to insult those who are humbled by their trials, nor to mistake pride for dignity, a sin which is alone sufficient to make men enemies of God." Things must have gone far wrong before Basil could think himself justified in using complaints so bitter and so sweeping. But he was sorely provoked. He had failed all round. Valens utterly refused to summon a council at Tarsus. Once more Basil wrote to the Western bishops, quoting Ps. lxviii. 21, "I looked for some to take pity upon Me, but there was no man, neither found I any to comfort Me." For thirteen years he had striven against heresy; but from the West had come no fraternal visit, no letter of consolation, no proof of love.[2] He had asked them to summon a council, and no council had been summoned; he had begged for a deputation of bishops, and no deputation had been sent. In 376 there was a gleam of hope. Rome seemed likely to decide for Meletius, and Basil declared that Paulinus was inclined to the heresy of Marcellus. But Dorotheus seems to have given some offence at Rome, and in 377 came the final answer of Damasus. It was a thunderbolt for Basil. Together with Peter of Alexandria the Pope not only decided absolutely for Paulinus, but even branded with the name of Arian, Basil's friends, Meletius and Eusebius of Samosata, who were actual victims of Arian persecution?[3] Basil refused to accept any decision which cast a slur on the sainted Patriarch of Antioch.[4]

Probably all the negotiation was shipwrecked by prejudices which, in the difficulties and delays of communication, and the fact that neither party understood the language of the other, could hardly be removed. Even Bossuet condemns those who rashly mount their tripods and condemn Basil for indifference to the authority of "the apostolic see." He was, however, much grieved by the haughtiness of Damasus, which ruined all his expectations, and to which he more than once alluded.

[1] Pope Damasus. [2] *Epp.* cclxii., cclxiii. [3] *Ep.* ccxiv.

[4] The fact that Latin has but one word, *substantia*, for the two Greek words, *Ousia* and *Hypostasis*, was a source of great trouble. Paulinus won the favour of the West because he refused to use the word "substance," and spoke not of "three Hypostases" (a phrase used quite harmlessly in the East) but of "three Persons" (*Prosopa*). Further than this, Jerome was at Rome with strong prejudice in favour of Paulinus. Jer. *Ep.* xvi.

On Aug. 9, 378, Valens perished at Adrianople by fire, and on the plains of Mimas, as the magician had foretold.[1] On Jan. 1, 379, Basil died just too soon to see the fruit of his labours. Had he but lived a few months longer he might have been chosen "to preside over the Council of Constantinople, to inspire a new Constantine, and to put the final touch to the work of Athanasius."[2] But the toils and troubles of his life had worn him out. Gregory of Nazianzus, who two years later pronounced his funeral oration, was unable to stand by his dying bed, being himself detained at Seleucia by dangerous illness. But probably Gregory of Nyssa was with his brother, and many of the inhabitants of Caesarea surrounded him weeping. His last words—like those of Augustine, Bernard, Huss, Luther, Melancthon, Columbus, Xavier—were, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

His funeral was a memorable scene, and showed the high estimation in which he was held. Not only Christians, but Jews and Pagans, thronged the streets in such vast numbers, and were so eager to press close to his bier, that several persons were crushed to death. He was buried among other bishops in the Church of the Martyr Eupsychius, being himself a bishop and a confessor almost worthy of the name of martyr.[3]

We have already spoken of his works, but may add the estimate of his life-long friend. "When," says Gregory of Nazianzus, "I take into my hands and read his *Hexaemeron*, I am brought into communion with the Creator. . . . When I peruse the books he has written on the Holy Spirit, I find out God. . . . When I read his other expositions, I do not halt at the mere outward letter, but I pierce deep into the spirit, and hear as it were 'one deep calling to another'; and I behold light streaming in upon light, and thus I grasp the sublime meanings of Holy Scripture."[4]

The story of his life has furnished a sufficient indication of his character. He was pure, disinterested, devoted. Such failings as he had—for instance, his use of that "oeconomy" which sometimes goes to the verge of disingenuousness—were those of the Easterns generally. If he was not free from ambition we must not forget that

> "Fame is the spur which the clear spirit doth raise,
> The last infirmity of noble minds."

[1] Amm. Marc. xxix. 1.
[2] Fialon, p. 145.
[3] Ps. Amphiloch. *Vit. S. Basil.*
[4] *Orat.* xliii.

His faults were those of a noble and masterful nature which imperiously refuses to let any private interests or individual feelings stand in the way of its own designs. Two contemporaries —Rufinus and Jerome—allude to the prevalent impression as to his pride. "Basil," says Rufinus, "was humble towards God, but Gregory was humble towards men also." Jerome—if the clause be genuine—says that "he ruined many gifts of continence and intellect by the single evil of pride."[1] Even Gregory in his panegyric hardly defends him from this charge, but shows that it was counterbalanced by his pity for the poor, his defence of the weak, his tenderness even to lepers, his incessant efforts to do good to the afflicted, to undo the heavy burden and to let the oppressed go free. Gregory, forgetting all personal wrongs, pronounced his splendid eulogy. He spoke of his love and of his severity, his noble silence and genial conversation, his various learning and his tender compassion. Even "his smile was praise, and his silence a rebuke to the uneasy conscience."

We may here pause to notice that the decade of Basil's death marks the disappearance of most of the familiar names of the earlier phases of the great Arian controversy. Acacius died in 366, Hilary in 368, Eudoxius of Constantinople in 370, Lucifer of Cagliari in 371, Athanasius about 373, Euzoius of Antioch in 376, Ursacius and Valens, who acted so prominent and little creditable a part in the reign of Constantius, were condemned by synods held at Rome in 369, and after that vanish into darkness.[2]

The only distinct memorial of Basil at Caesarea is his name, which still clings to one of the surrounding hills. There are the remains of a large mediaeval monastery in a neighbouring valley. His church and hospitals have been swept away. And yet "his rule became the model of all other monastic orders. There is in fact no other order in the Greek Church, and when either monks or nuns appear in a Greek or Russian picture they must be Basilians and no other. The habit is a plain black tunic with a cowl, the tunic fastened round the waist with a girdle of cord or leather. Such is the dress of the Greek caloyer, and it never varies."

I have not thought it necessary to notice the later legends of St. Basil, of which the most famous has been versified by Southey in his "All for Love." In this legend Basil saves a youth who

[1] Jer. *Chron.* A.D. 360. [2] Robertson, i. 253.

had sold his soul to a demon. In other Armenian legends his prayers not only save souls from purgatory, but even rescue a lost angel from the company of demons.

In art Basil is represented in Greek pontificals, bareheaded, with a thin worn countenance. There is a fine picture in the Louvre by Subleyras (1745) called *La Messe de St. Basile.* It represents the visit of the Emperor Valens to the church of Caesarea.

XIV

GREGORY OF NYSSA[1]

"τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τὸ κοινὸν ἔρεισμα."—GREG. NAZ.

SECTION I

FROM HIS YOUTH TO HIS CONSECRATION AS BISHOP

(A.D. 335-372)

THE life of Gregory is closely associated with those of his namesake of Nazianzus and his brother Basil. The three are often spoken of as "the three great Cappadocians." To their united efforts was due, in no small degree, the victory of orthodox Christianity over Arianism, Apollinarianism, and other heresies. The humble Bishop of Nyssa was the equal of his great contemporaries in ability and theological learning, but not in commanding personal and official influence.

The Life of Basil has already introduced us to that beautiful

[1] Photius, *Codd.* vi. vii.; Suidas, s. v. Γρηγόριος: Cave, *Hist. Lit.* i. 244; Tillemont, tom. ix.; Fabricius, *Bibl. Graec.* tom. ix.; Schröckh, Bd. xiv. 1-147; Rupp, *Gregors d. Bisch. von Nyssa, Leben und Meinungen*, Leipzig, 1834; Heyns, *Disp. de Greg. Nyss.* Lugd. Batav. 1835; Böhringer, *Die Alte Kirche*, Die Drei Kappadozier (2te Ausg.) Stuttgart, 1876; Alb. Butler, *Lives of the Saints*, sub March 9.

Fronto Ducaeus, Paris, 1615, 2 vols. Appendix, *ex. ed.* Jac. Gretseri, Paris, 1618. Various editions were made by Zacagni, *Collectanea Monument. Vet. Eccl. Graec.* Rom. 1698; Gallandi, *Bibl. Vet. Patr.* vi.; A. Mai, *Nov. Patr. Biblioth.* t. iv. Rome, 1834; *Opera*, Aeg. Morél, Paris, 1638, 3 vols.; Migne, *Patrol. Graec.* vols. xliv.-xlvi. Some of his works are published in Oehler, *Bibl. d. Kirchenvater*, Leipzig, 1858; Halis Saxonum, 1865. There are various treatises on his theological opinions by Möller (*Greg. Nyss. Doctr. de hominis naturâ*, Halis, 1854), Hermann (*De Salute adipiscendâ*, Halis, 1875), Vincenzi, and others. The elaborate materials of the Benedictines for an edition of Gregory of Nyssa were unhappily lost in the French Revolution.

home in Pontus, in which the elder Basil, a professor of rhetoric, and his noble wife Emmelia brought up ten children—five girls and five boys. Of the boys (as we have seen), three became bishops. Basil, the eldest, Bishop of Caesarea; Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa; and Peter, the youngest, who was chosen Bishop of Sebaste in Pontus.[1] Of the girls, one was the saintly Macrina, who was the guide and friend of Basil and Gregory, and was to Peter father, teacher, attendant, and mother when he was left an orphan in early childhood by the death of the elder Basil.[2]

Gregory was the third son, and was born about the close of A.D. 335, either at Caesarea or Sebaste.[3] Basil was six or seven years his senior, and between them came the fine youth Naucratius, whose tragic death was so severe a blow to them all.[4]

While Basil was receiving at Athens and elsewhere the most brilliant education which that age could afford, Gregory was deprived of all such advantages. He received his training, such as it was, in the schools of his native city. Macrina, on her deathbed, reminded him that his high position was due to the prayers of his parents, for that he owed little or nothing to any direct assistance which he had derived from home.[5] It is probable that the circumstances of the household were reduced by the death of the father, which took place before the education of Basil was finished, and while Gregory was still a boy. The family could boast of rank, wealth, and distinction, but as there were ten children, the death of the elder Basil, and the consequent loss of the large income which he derived from his profession as a pleader and a teacher of rhetoric, must materially have affected their resources. However that may be, it is certain that the only one of the sons who received any but the most ordinary advantages was the eldest, and that the younger children were greatly aided by the stimulating influences of their elder sister.

But the young Gregory was a born student. His share of the family property left him enough to live upon without the

[1] Now Siwas in Lesser Armenia, on the north bank of the Upper Halys.

[2] *πάντα γενομένη τῷ νέῳ, πατήρ, διδάσκαλος, παιδαγωγός, μήτηρ, De Vit. S. Macr.* (Migne, iii. p. 971).

[3] See *Orat. in xl. Mart. ad init.* He says to the large congregation gathered to hear him at Sebaste, *ὑμεῖς ἐστέ μου πατέρες* (Migne, *Opp.* iii. 751).

[4] *De Vit. S. Macr.* (*Opp.* iii. 966). See *supra*, ii. 9.

[5] *De Vit. S. Macr.* (*Opp.* iii. cf. 79). He speaks of his scanty education and of his indebtedness to his brother only, in his letter to Libanius, *Ep.* xiii.

necessity of adopting a profession. His health was weak, and his disposition shy, and by following his own bent he acquired that independence and originality of tone which gives a peculiar value to his religious writings. Like Basil and his friend of Nazianzus, he was a diligent student of Origen, who exercised over his intellect a spell even more powerful than that which is visible in the writings of his friend and brother.

The natural bent of many members of the family was towards asceticism and religious exercises. The youthful Gregory did not share in this tendency. He was a layman, and found his chief delight in the studies by which he was absorbed.[1] The main incident of his early years was one which produced a very deep impression upon him, and practically decided the tenor of his future life. It was as follows:—

Emmelia and her children shared in the passion for relics, which was a characteristic of the age, and having become possessed of the relics of "the forty martyrs" wished to translate them with solemn festivities to a chapel erected for their reception on the family property at Annesi.[2] Gregory was summoned to the festival service in honour of the martyrs, which was continued all through the night in his mother's garden. Other persons beside the studious youth looked with much disfavour on these nightly vigils, and, so far from sharing in the general enthusiasm, Gregory was annoyed with his mother for summoning him away from his beloved books, and for not having fixed the ceremony for some less inconvenient time. He did indeed obey the summons, but arriving at Annesi in a fatigued and indifferent frame of mind, he got weary of the psalm-singing which accompanied the consecration of the inurned relics, and retiring to a neighbouring arbour, flung himself down and fell fast asleep. From this sleep, as he narrated in his sermon on the martyrs long afterwards, he was aroused by a terrific dream, which was in point of fact the voiceless echo of a conscience not perfectly at ease. He dreamt that he wished to re-enter the garden and to take part in the service, but on attempting to do

[1] His fondness for classical writers appears in the allusions and quotations of his letters. See *Ep.* xi.—a charming letter to a young student.

[2] These forty martyrs were Christian soldiers who, during a persecution in Armenia, had endured cruel tortures for the faith of Christ, and had finally been driven forth naked to perish of the rigors of the Armenian winter. See Gregory's two orations in their honour (*Opp.* ii. 931-936, ed. Paris, 1615, and Append. p. 206).

so he was prevented by a crowd of the warrior martyrs, who, rising in a body, uplifted their rods in a threatening attitude, and would have proceeded to chastise him but for the friendly intercession of one of their number. At this point he awoke, and, weeping for the neglect which he had shown, he hastened to the urn which enshrined the hallowed ashes, and, lamenting his folly, entreated God to be merciful to him, and the holy soldiers to pardon his transgression.

It was probably in consequence of the religious impressions left by this dream that Gregory came out from his literary retirement, and undertook the office of a reader (Anagnostes) in the Church services. In this capacity he had to read the lessons, though he was not permitted to preach or to explain them.[1]

But his repugnance to ecclesiastical functions was not yet conquered. He suddenly threw up his office of reader and became a teacher of rhetoric. This step greatly scandalised his friends, and called forth the energetic remonstrance of Gregory of Nazianzus. "Your friends," he said, "do not praise your inglorious glory, to speak a little in your style,[2] and your gradual deflexion to that which is worst, and to that worst of demons—as Euripides says—ambition. You determined to be called a rhetorician rather than a Christian. My friend, do not, do not, I entreat you, continue long in this frame of mind, but awake to soberness even though late, and return to thyself, and express your regrets to God and to the faithful. Pardon me if I grieve because of my friendship for you, and if my indignation is kindled both on your own behalf and on that of all ecclesiastics of every rank, yes, and even of all Christians." After reminding him how much more rich and precious are the streams of the Scriptures, which he has abandoned, than the bitter and brackish pools of secular eloquence, he promises to pray for him to God who quickens the dead.

This incident probably occurred after 363, for during the reign of Julian the profession of a teacher of rhetoric was not open to Christians.

Another proof of Gregory's disinclination, at this period of his life, to adopt the current conception of that ascetic celibacy which was known as "the true philosophy," was furnished by

[1] Greg. Naz. *Ep.* xi.

[2] *οὐκ ἐπαινοῦσι σου τὴν ἄδοξον εὐδοξίαν ἵνα εἴπω τι κἀγὼ καθ' ὑμᾶς.*

his marriage.[1] His wife's name was Theosebeia. We know nothing of her except from the glowing terms in which Gregory of Nazianzus speaks of her in writing to console the Bishop of Nyssa on the occasion of her death.[2] He calls her "my Theosebeia,—for I call her mine, as one who lived according to God, since spiritual relationship is superior to bodily relationship." He speaks of her as "the boast of the Church, the ornament of Christ, the blessing of our generation," and as "truly sacred, and the true spouse of a priest."[3] He calls her the "sister" of his friend, and there can be little doubt that when Gregory became a priest the popular demand for sacerdotal celibacy, together with those extravagant views of the glory of virginity which he afterwards learned to share, led to the separation of wife and husband. It has been assumed, though without sufficient evidence, that Theosebeia joined the sisterhood of Macrina. The marriage can hardly have been a happy one. We read of no children, and Gregory in his praises of virginity loudly bewails his inability to share in its glory. He compares himself to confectioners and attendants who prepare a rich banquet for the wealthy while they themselves do not participate in the luxuries provided.[4] He sighs in vain over a lost possibility, and wishes that he had recognised the truest blessings before it had become too late to enjoy them.[5] Had his marriage been all to him that it often is to others he could scarcely have written in such a tone as this.

But a short experience sufficed to disenchant him of any charm which a secular life may once have had in his eyes. The profession of a teacher became as distasteful to him as it afterwards did to Augustine.[6] He was too shy and sensitive to be a teacher, and he keenly felt his inability to inspire his pupils with any of his own enthusiasm for literature and eloquence. He complains in a letter to a sophist—perhaps Libanius—that their ardour for glory was far more military than philosophical.

Disgusted with the world, and swayed by the bias of his own

[1] Rupp (*Gregor.* 24) is mistaken in regarding his marriage as doubtful.

[2] See Greg. Naz. *Ep.* cxcvii. The letter seems to have been written about 384.

[3] *τὴν ὄντως ἱερὰν καὶ ἱέρεως σύζυγον.*

[4] *De Virg.* 3. He regards virginity as beyond all praise (*κρείττων ἐγκωμίων*), and speaks with the same exaggeration as Jerome does about the troubles and inconveniences of marriage. See *infra*, p. 83.

[5] Id. *ib.* *ὡς μακάριόν γε ἂν ἦν εἰ μὴ οὕτως εἶχεν μηδὲ τῇ ὑστεροβουλίᾳ τὸ καλὸν ἐγνωσίραμεν.*

[6] See *Epp.* xiii. xiv.

retiring temperament as well as by the exhortations and example of the elder members of his family, he left his wife and his profession, abandoned all care for secular interests, and devoted himself heart and soul to the studious toil of an ascetic life.[1] He became a member of the monastic brotherhood which Basil established on the wooded hills of the Iris, not far from the sisterhood over which Macrina presided. Here he spent some time in uninterrupted labours, and became more and more enamoured of holy seclusion. His three books *On Virginity* were the first fruits of these thoughtful and quiet years.

In this treatise he adopts with vehemence the current error which placed the celibate above the married life. He supports this view by disparagement of even the happiest marriage on grounds which practically reduce themselves to the glorification of religious selfishness. His arguments are in violent contrast with those of Scripture, which, from Genesis to Revelation, speaks of marriage with honour as a sacred condition, ordained by God in the times of man's innocency. He places the ideal of life in *Theoria*, or spiritual contemplativeness, whereas the ideal of the loftiest and most precious lives has always been in obedience and service. It is true that he only regards celibacy as the first step to that spiritual holiness which constitutes the perfect virginity, but his remarks about marriage show that he misunderstood its true character. He talks about the pangs of travail for instance as though they were not infinitely compensated by the blessedness of motherhood, nor does he seem to form the remotest conception of the angelic virtues which a holy union, so far from destroying, quickens into their fullest life. At the same time, he is candid enough to admit the idleness, the brutality, the sly intrusiveness, the arrogant self-assertion, the wild extravagance, into which many were tempted by self-macerating excesses. He does not attempt to conceal the fact that the self-delusion and pride of monkish "virgins" had become an open scandal; but he fails to see that celibacy and matrimony stand, in God's sight, on an exactly equal footing, according as He has called men to the one state or the other. His lamentations that, by his marriage, he had lost the possibility of that bliss and reward which he believed to be given to virginity,—in other words that he had shared the lot of nearly all the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and saints of God, since the world began—sufficiently reveal the error

[1] See *Ep.* ix., which is written from some desert retirement.

in which he and most of the Fathers of that age were disastrously entangled.[1]

He seems to have lived in the seclusion of Annesi for about ten years. They were devoted to studies which bore good fruit in later days. From his beloved monastery he came forth a profound theologian, and he had also mastered no small part of the science of his day. Architecture, natural history, medicine, had attracted his special notice, and his references to them are frequent. He also shared with Basil a sentiment of delight in the beauty of nature, which, even when it was felt, has found but rare expression in the prose literature of ancient times.[2]

It seems to have been towards the close of this period that Gregory was guilty of the extraordinary conduct which we have detailed in the Life of Basil. To his elder brother Gregory was intensely loyal, and he felt that the bitter estrangement which existed between the Bishop of Caesarea and their uncle, the Pontic bishop Gregory, was a family disgrace. It was this which misled him into the astute simplicity of trying to bring about a reconciliation by forging letters from his uncle to Basil; a simplicity which was very speedily detected, and brought upon Gregory a storm of Basil's wrathful, yet half-amused and greatly astonished indignation. After such a rebuke, Gregory was not likely to offend in that way again.[3]

From his monastic retirement Gregory was withdrawn by the summons of Basil, who was now engaged in those struggles against Bishop Anthimus of Tyana and others which embittered and probably shortened his life. It was part of Basil's plan to appoint bishops at various outposts of his diocese to protect his outlying towns from the encroachments of heresy and ambition. With characteristic disregard for the susceptibilities of those whom he used for his great designs, he consecrated Gregory about A.D. 372 to the bishopric of the wretched little town of Nyssa in Cappadocia.[4] Eusebius of Samosata no doubt felt, as

[1] He naturally tries to prove that he does not mean to *disparage* marriage (*De Virg.* 8, *μηδεὶς διὰ τούτων ἡμᾶς ἀθετεῖν οἰέσθω τὴν οἰκονομίαν τοῦ γάμου*), but practically he does so. On the developed errors of that day respecting marriage, see the note at the end of the section.

[2] See *Ep.* xx., and the beautiful description of the joys of spring, summer, and autumn, with which he begins *Ep.* x.

[3] Basil, *Ep.* lviii., comp. lx.

[4] It is now a village, still bearing the name of Nirse, or Nissa. Hamilton, *Researches*, ii. 265.

in the case of Nazianzen, that this was a sacrifice of Gregory's talents. Basil's reply that "it was better for a bishop to confer honour on his see than to receive honour from it"[1] was hardly apposite. It is as though Basil had said, "I shall bury him alive at Nyssa, but he may, as far as he can, kindle a lamp in his tomb." For, though it is true that Nyssa would never have been heard of but for Gregory's connexion with it, it is no less true that Gregory's fame would have derived no addition, even from such a see as Alexandria or Constantinople. Perhaps, however, the letters which Gregory had forged, though with so laudable an intention, may have weakened Basil's opinion of his fitness for any more important post.

Gregory was profoundly troubled by the summons to give up the studious life for which he was best fitted, and to enter on the turmoil of practical episcopacy, which was alien from his genius and his antecedents. But no ordinary man could resist the strong will of the autocratic Basil. Gregory was obliged to yield, and the world gained by the sacrifice of his most cherished inclinations. Yet we learn from Basil that he had to be ordained bishop by actual force.[2] The earliest glimpse we get of him after his consecration is when he was present with his brother at the first sermon preached by Gregory of Nazianzus after his unhappy consecration to the see of Sasima. The new Bishop of Nyssa—never very practical—had arrived some days too late for the ceremony of consecration; and in the oration delivered in the presence of the brethren by the eloquent Nazianzen his displeasure with both of them appears through all the stately rhetoric in which he eulogises their eminence and goodness.

He knew well that the see of Nyssa would not be a bed of roses. The Arian Valens was already Emperor. The civil rulers all held the same views, and many of the bishops were heretical in a greater or less degree. Still he could hardly have anticipated the violence and unscrupulousness of the attack to which he was subjected.

Possibly his position was rendered more difficult by his want of tact and his lack of knowledge of the human heart. His one desire was to help Basil amid the complications of antagonism by

[1] Basil, *Ep.* xcviii.

[2] Basil, *Ep.* ccxxv. *κατὰ πᾶσαν ἀναγκην . . . ἐκβιασθείς.* Possibly there was a certain traditional formality in the resistance, the show of which is still carried to a ludicrous extreme in some Eastern churches.

which he was surrounded, and with this view he seems to have tried to assemble synods of provincial bishops. But these synods, which he was totally unable to manage, only proved a source of annoyance, and did harm rather than good to Basil's cause.[1]

He had not been a bishop for three years when (A.D. 375) a certain Philochares brought against him a charge of having embezzled the revenues of his see, and of having violated the rules of the Church by an uncanonical election. The charge was brought before a provincial synod at Ancyra in Galatia, and the case was referred to the decision of Demosthenes, the Arian governor of Pontus. The bishop was at the time suffering from a severe attack of pleurisy and liver-complaint, and, as he was brutally treated by the soldiers under whose escort he was being conducted to the governor, he determined to escape. He was compelled to do this out of physical infirmity, as well as from the certainty that from a creature of Valens—and one who had already been half-maddened by the discomfiture, not unmixed with contempt, which he had received from Basil—he would receive nothing but injustice. We do not know how he managed to give the slip to his captors, but he did so, and got safely into a place of hiding.[2] His escape was misrepresented, and Basil—who says that the blow was really aimed at himself—addressed to the governor a letter in his own name and that of the Cappadocian clergy, to state that the treasurer of the Church of Nyssa entirely acquitted Gregory of the charge of embezzlement; that there was no irregularity in his appointment to the see; and that, even if there had been, the charge would lie, not against Gregory, but against the bishops who had appointed him. Further, they told the governor plainly that, in any case, this was not a civil matter, but a purely ecclesiastical question with which he had no right to meddle. Basil also wrote to a powerful friend, Aburgius, to use his influence in Gregory's favour, and to save his gentle spirit from the misery of a public trial.[3] The appeals were fruitless. The governor knew that the Emperor would be in his favour, and as Gregory did not appear at Ancyra, he assembled a synod of Arian bishops at Nyssa in 376, by whom

[1] Basil, *Ep.* c. (*Opp.* iii. 196, ed. 1730). He complains to Eusebius of Samosata that Gregory in his simplicity (χρηστότης) in assembling synods at Ancyra καὶ οὐδένα τρόπον ἐπιβουλεύων ἡμὶν ἀφίησι.

[2] Basil (*Ep.* ccxxv.) vaguely says that in his sickness and pain "he was compelled to be removed into some quiet spot." He was fortunate to get out of the hands of soldiers.

[3] Basil, *Ep.* xxxiii.

Gregory was deposed, and an Arian put in his place. Of this person Basil says that he was not so much a man as a slave worth only a few pence, and a corrupter of the faith.[1] Gregory was therefore banished by a decree of Valens, and his great brother could help him no further.

For two years he wandered about in a condition of restless misery. We have no detailed account of his life or occupations, but he bemoaned his hard fate to all his correspondents.

One of his few extant letters gives us an insight into his wretchedness. He deplores the loss of home, and friends, and flock, and all that he held most dear. He dwells with fond affection on his little house in Nyssa, with its humble furniture, its fire and table, its bench and sackcloth, which he had been forced to exchange for a miserable den in which there was an abundance of nothing but cold and darkness. He has no hope but in the prayers of his friends, and meanwhile he is exposed to the most bitter scrutiny of enemies. They set all his faults in a notebook, and conned them by rote. His voice, his look, his dress, the movement of his hands, the position of his feet, were all made the subject of unfavourable comment; and he was treated (he says) with downright hostility if he were not perpetually sighing and groaning, or if he did not go about in slovenly and dishevelled guise. His illusions in this, as in other letters, are very vague, but they seem to imply that he is living in some monastic community in which his fellow-monks looked upon him with the hatred and suspicion which, as we learn from Jerome and others of the Fathers, were only too rife in some such nominal fraternities.[2]

Gregory of Nazianzus strove to comfort and strengthen him. In answer to a letter in which the deposed Bishop of Nyssa had compared himself to a log tossed about upon the waves, he begged him not to take so desponding a view. "A log tossed on the sea is carried hither and thither against its will, but your movements are decided by the providence of God; and though you have no settled home you yet may have the settled purpose of being a blessing to many. Who would think of blaming the sun for rolling in its beneficent orbit and scattering its healing light, or who would blame the planets for not being fixed stars?"[3]

[1] Basil, *Ep.* ccxxxix. A little before he says that nowadays the servants of servants (*οἰκοτρίβων οἰκότριβαι*) are made bishops.

[2] *Ep.* xviii.

[3] Greg. Naz. *Epp.* lxxii. lxxiii.

He also wrote to beg him not to yield himself too much to the thought of his troubles, for troubles grieve us less the less we think of them. As for the heretics, who were doing mischief in his diocese, sunny days bring out the adders. If we leave all to God they will soon cease to hiss, and will creep back into their holes. He assured him that he was with him in sympathy and in prayer, though he was unable to share his exile.[1]

The Bishop of Nazianzus was justified in his hopefulness. In 378 Valens perished in the frightful rout of Adrianople, and the young and orthodox Gratian succeeded. Gratian permitted the exiled bishops to return. Gregory was received back by his people with open arms. They streamed out of Nyssa, crowded the roads, and welcomed him with demonstrations of affection which were a source of much comfort to him in the trials which he had yet to face. The villages that lay along the river bank were thronged with the crowds that came forth to meet him with tears and cries of joy. A heavy fall of rain, which drove people into their houses, enabled him to enter the town of Nyssa unobserved, but no sooner had the people heard the sound of his chariot-wheels than they thronged the streets in such dense numbers that he could not proceed, and nearly fainted from fatigue and emotion. His first visit was paid to his church, and he says that it looked like a river of fire from the crowds of virgins who came to welcome back their beloved teacher and who carried lighted tapers before him as he slowly made his way to his episcopal throne.[2]

When Gregory was suggested to Basil as a fit person to be one of his envoys to Damasus at Rome in 375, the Bishop of Caesarea set aside the suggestion.[3] "I know him well," he wrote; "he is entirely inexperienced in ecclesiastical affairs. A man of right judgment would be sure to respect him and value his intercourse. But he knows not how to flatter; and of what use would such a man be in negotiations with a prelate so haughty as the Bishop of Rome, who will not listen to those who tell him the truth from humble places?"[4]

The year 379 was marked for Gregory by two strokes of terrible sorrow. He lost in that year his brother Basil and his sister Macrina. Their mother, the holy Emmelia, had died in

[1] Greg. Naz. *Ep.* lxxxi.
[2] *Ep.* vi. (Migne, iii. 1035).
[3] Basil, *Ep.* ccxv.
[4] Id. *Ep.* ccxv. 1, ὑψηλῷ τε καὶ μετεώρῳ ἄνω που καθημένῳ.

373,[1] and her last words had been a blessing on her children. She died holding the hands of Peter and Macrina, and they buried her by her husband in the Chapel of the Forty Martyrs.

Basil died on the first day of the year 379. Macrina was bound to him by ties of sisterly affection, as close and tender as those which united Blaise Pascal to his sister Jacqueline, but she endured the loss with the constancy which is inspired by Christian faith and hope. She did not endeavour, as the Stoics did, to crush down the natural affections by a hard and unnatural apathy, but rather cherished them as tender plants which shall blossom perfectly in heaven. Gregory of Nazianzus was prevented by illness from being present at the funeral of his friend and "embracing his holy dust";[2] but some time afterwards he delivered that eloquent panegyric from which we learn so much about the great Bishop of Caesarea. He says that his chief comfort is to see Basil's virtues reflected in the mirror of his brother's life. Gregory of Nyssa had ever looked up to Basil as a father, had received from him his literary training, and had been accustomed for years to lean on his superior strength. He felt his loss most deeply. We are not expressly told that he was with Basil when he died, but he was present at his funeral, and delivered the funeral oration, in which he speaks of his brother with passionate affection and admiration, calling him "fair to God from his birth and in moral character gray-haired from his youth," and comparing him with Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, and St. Paul. Indeed, he calls him "the Great Basil"; and it is from him mainly that the epithet has been handed down to posterity in connexion with Basil's name.[3]

The youngest brother, Peter of Sebaste, urged Gregory to take up his greatest theological work—the answer to Eunomius, Bishop of Cyrene, who was an avowed Anomoean. Basil had attacked the views of Eunomius, who had replied to the attack. As Basil was now dead, it became Gregory's duty to vindicate his brother from the criticisms and abusive accusations of the heretical pupil of Aetius. Gregory undertook the task, and completed it in twelve books, which he dedicated to Peter. In his dedicatory letter he apologises for any warmth which he may have exhibited. It might not seem in accordance with the

[1] Greg. Naz. *Ep.* v. (Migne, *Patr. Graec.* xxxvii. 5). [2] Id. *Ep.* lxxvi.

[3] Greg. Nyss. *Orat. in laud. fratr. Basil:* τὸν ἀστεῖον τῷ θεῷ ἐκ γεννήσεως, τὸν τοῖς ἤθεσι πόλιον ἐκ νεότητος.

moderate tone of Basil, but it rose from the indignation which he felt at the attacks of Eunomius on the character and fair fame of one who had been to him as a father.

In Sept. 379 Gregory was summoned to the Council at Antioch, which aimed at restoring peace to the Church by ending the schism and opposing the spread of Arianism. On his return from the council, he took the opportunity of visiting his beloved sister in her monastery at Annesi. He found her dangerously ill. The meeting was deeply pathetic. Gregory, amid the trials of his persecution and banishment, had not seen her for more than eight years. She was but fifty-two, and had been remarkable for health and loveliness; but when her affianced lover died, she devoted herself to a life of self-denial. She waited on her mother more assiduously than "many maid-servants";[1] undertook the entire business connected with large estates in three different provinces; arranged the marriages of her four sisters; trained her infant-brother Peter; and checked the haughty ambition of Basil. She presided for many years over the religious community which she had founded in her paternal estate of Annesi, which she never left. Her grief for the death of her brothers Naucratius and Basil and her mother Emmelia—chastened and suppressed as it was—had affected her health, which was further weakened by her severe austerities. When Gregory arrived, she was lying in a burning fever complicated by asthma. As he drew near to Annesi, he had been terrified by a thrice-repeated dream, in which he saw her carrying in her hands the relics of the martyrs, which dazzled his eyes like sunlight reflected from a mirror. He was met by the news that she was ill. He had hoped to find his brother Peter, who had started four days earlier, but had missed him on the way. The monks of the monastery had flocked out to meet him, and the virgins were in the church awaiting his arrival. They held a service in the chapel, and as the nuns went out he observed that Macrina was not among them, which showed him that her illness must be serious. He was immediately ushered to her cell, and there he found her lying on a plank covered with sackcloth with nothing but another plank for her pillow. Supporting herself on one arm, she strove to rise in honour to him as a bishop, but he prevented her. Then, uplifting her hands, she thanked God for

[1] *De Vit. S. Macr.* ἀντὶ πολλῶν αὐτῇ θεραπαινίδων ἦν ἡ παρὰ τῆς θυγατρὸς θεραπεία.

his visit, and in order not to pain him, she strove to conceal the difficulty of her breathing, and to address him in pleasant words and with a cheerful countenance. The mention of Basil caused Gregory to burst into tears, but Macrina consoled him with arguments of peace and hope, discoursing with him about life and death and immortality.

Then, at her request, he retired to a pleasant resting-place in the garden to take some food after his journey; but his mind was filled with the saddest presentiments which a cheerful message from his sister failed to dissipate. Again visiting her bedside, he held sweet converse with her about their parents and about the past. She spoke of the many reasons which they had for gratitude, and thanked God that she had always laboured with her own hands, and had never been compelled either to be dependent on others or to refuse their appeals for aid. He then spoke sadly to her about his own many trials. She did not hesitate to rebuke him for not regarding these trials as a part of God's mercies towards him, and as being the natural lot of the eminence and world-wide celebrity which he had been permitted to attain. In the evening he again attended the service, in which he seems to have spent the greater part of the night. At dawn he once more sought his dying sister, and she talked to him so wisely and beautifully that her voice seemed to him like the voice of an angel. At sunset she poured forth her last prayer. She marked the sign of the cross upon her eyes, mouth, and heart; and when breath failed her, the movement of her hands and lips showed that she was still engaged in silent supplication. When lights were brought in she opened her eyes, but strove in vain to pronounce audibly the vesper thanksgiving.[1] Once more she signed the sign of the cross upon her forehead, heaved a deep sigh, and ended at once her prayer and her life. Gregory's own hands, as she had wished, closed her eyes and lips, and composed her limbs. She had left instructions with one of the nuns, named Lampadia, about her obsequies, which were of the simplest and humblest character. A noble widow named Vestiana, who had joined the nunnery, shared with Gregory the duty of laying out the body. They flung over her corpse a black cloak which had belonged to her mother, feeling that she would have disliked any costlier covering, and admiring the beautiful dead face which shone out all the more brightly from the humble bier. Besides her poor

[1] ἔκδηλος μὲν ἦν φθέγξασθαι τὴν ἐπιλύχνιον εὐχαριστίαν προθυμουμένη.

worn garments they found that her sole ornaments were an iron cross and an iron ring which hung round her neck. To Vestiana Gregory gave the cross and kept the ring for himself, because it too had a cross carved upon it. "You have chosen right," said Vestiana, "for the ring is hollow, and under the cross carved upon it is a fragment of the wood of the true Cross." Miracles were wrought by her remains, some of which are mentioned by Gregory, but others, of a more sublime character, are passed over, because he thinks that they would be received with incredulity.[1]

I have taken the narrative from the "Life of St. Macrina" which Gregory wrote in a letter to the monk Olympius. In the dialogue "On the Life and the Resurrection," which he also called "The Makrinia," he adds further particulars. He there records the arguments with which she had reproved his outburst of grief for Basil's death, and the discourse which she poured forth as from a fountain of Divine inspiration. It is towards the conclusion of this discourse that we find the remarkable eschatological opinions to which we shall have occasion to refer later on. Assisted by Araxius, the bishop of the diocese, and by two of the clergy, Gregory carried the bier of his beloved sister to the Chapel of the Forty Martyrs, where she was buried in the grave of the parents whom he had so truly loved. Deep was the sorrow in the little monastery where the nuns had lived together in prayer and praise, without hatred, without envy, united in peace and holy aspirations in a life like the life of the angels.

Of Gregory's fortunes between the death of Macrina and the Council of Constantinople in 381 we have no details, unless the events described in his nineteenth letter belong to this period.[2] We there learn that on his return to his diocese he was troubled by the heresies which had been industriously sown among his people by the Galatians. He also took part by invitation in an election by the people of Ibora to the bishopric of their vacant see. He was himself elected by them, and the election ended apparently in violent tumults and military intervention, of which no particulars are narrated.

It was perhaps in this interval that he also carried out the

[1] Texier says that at Melebuthi in Cappadocia, near Nyssa, St. Macrina is still worshipped, but Gregory is almost forgotten.

[2] *Ep.* xix. To the Bishop John.

commission assigned to him by the Council of Antioch, to visit the Church "of Arabia," or rather, as it appears, of Babylon. Gregory's gentleness and simplicity unfitted him for delicate negotiations, and above all for dealings with violent and unreasonable persons.[1] He seems to have effected nothing by his long and painful journey. He speaks of the Christians of Babylon in terms of utter disgust and despair, dwelling especially on their brutish barbarism and their addiction to habitual lies. On his return he was able to visit the Holy Land. He had an unwonted opportunity for doing this, since his journey was at the public expense, and the Emperor had put at his disposal a public vehicle. During the entire journey he retained his monastic habits, so that the carriage served him and his attendants "both for a monastery and a church," and they were able not only to fast and to chant the psalms, but also to observe the stated hours of prayer. So far from feeling the rapture which Jerome and Paula had felt in visiting the holy places, the sight even of Golgotha and Bethlehem and the Mount of Olives failed to disenchant him of the profound disgust which he felt for the Christians who lived at Jerusalem, and the pilgrims who visited it. Even Cyril of Jerusalem, though he had now resumed the office from which the Arians had so often succeeded in deposing him, was unable to cope either with the heresy or the gross immorality of the Holy City. Then, as in so many ages, it was a sink of wickedness, and that wickedness was increased by the demoralisation which ran riot among the bands of promiscuous pilgrims. In defence of the faith Cyril had to contend not only against the Arians but also against the followers of the learned Apollinaris of Laodicea, who charged the orthodox with regarding Jesus as a mere man. The intervention of the Bishop of Nyssa, whose main object in visiting Jerusalem had been to help the Church, was entirely without avail.

Gregory was an honest and outspoken as well as an able man, and though he was deeply influenced by the ecclesiastical superstitions of his age, yet when he saw the truth he had the courage to strike out against the stream of popular error. The thoughts with which he had been impressed by his visit to the Holy Land found expression in two letters—one to three ladies who lived in Jerusalem, and the other "On those Who go to Jerusalem." Pilgrimages were rapidly coming into vogue, and

[1] Χρηστότης and ἁπλότης are the characteristics ascribed to him by Basil.

Gregory saw that they were not only inefficacious for any real promotion of religious ends, but were even dangerous to the character of many who took part in them. His letter, of which the genuineness is no longer disputed, is almost unique in the literature of early Christianity. He begins by laying down the principle that no life can be regarded as truly religious which is not spent in accordance with the precepts of the Gospel. Now it had become a recognised notion that for the perfection of the ascetic life it was necessary to visit the holy places. But Christ had never given any such command. It was an arbitrary human ordinance, entirely destitute of Scriptural authority, and full of perils. Men and women had to travel together, to live together, to frequent the same small and inconvenient inns and hospices, to hear many vile words, to witness many unseemly sights. And for what purpose? Did Christ's bodily presence linger in Palestine? Was the Holy Spirit poured forth in special fulness upon the dwellers in Jerusalem? On the contrary, to judge by appearances, God was nearer to the dwellers in Cappadocia. If God were specially to be found at Jerusalem, the residents ought to excel in holiness, whereas the worst sins which afflict humanity — cunning, adultery, theft, idolatry, poisoning, envy, and murder—were there most prevalent, and that to such an extent that the citizens were like wild beasts thirsting for blood. If he had himself visited Jerusalem it was not as a pilgrim, but as a friend of the Church. Nor had he gained any increase of faith by his visit; nay, he had gained nothing but the conviction that more piety was to be found at home than in the Holy Land, for the changing of places brings God no nearer to us. He can come to us wherever we seek Him. He who with evil thoughts in his heart stands even on Golgotha, or Olivet, or in the Chapel of the Resurrection, is as far from Christ as though he were an infidel. A faithful Christian who lived in Cappadocia had no heed whatever to leave it for Palestine, and would receive the gifts of grace in proportion to his faith, with no reference to any pilgrimage.[1]

This letter has well been called a pearl among the writings of Gregory, and of greater value than all his allegoric and ascetic treatises, because it breathes the true spirit of the Gospel. He wrote to Eustathia and two other ladies, whom he had known at Jerusalem, to pour out the grief which he felt at the

[1] The genuineness of this letter is admitted by Baronius and Tillemont.

thought that, whereas elsewhere all Christians were united in the faith of the Trinity, in Jerusalem there raged between brother and brother a hatred which ought to be reserved for sin and the devil. His views expressed in these two letters are original and independent. Scarcely anything like them is found in the writings of the fourth century or throughout the Middle Ages. They run sharply counter to the views expressed by Jerome in his letter to Paulinus of Nola.[1] But Gregory could not resist the logic of facts. He could not approve of a religious fashion which had no Divine sanction in its favour, and which increased the perils even of "the religious" without in any way advancing their holiness. Let us be thankful that the fourth century produced at least one warning against one form of religious materialism.

In 381 we find Gregory occupying a most honoured place at the Council of Constantinople. At this period he had come to be regarded as "the common pillar of the Church." He rejoiced unfeignedly at the promotion of the Bishop of Nazianzus to the patriarchate, and it was during this visit that he read part of his book against Eunomius to Gregory and Jerome.[2] He delivered the inaugural oration on Gregory's election, and the funeral oration on the death of Meletius, the much-loved Primate of Antioch. He is usually regarded as the author of the clauses which were added to the Nicene Creed at this council, and although this cannot be maintained on the sole and late authority of Nicephorus Callistus, yet it was no doubt in great measure owing to his influence as a theologian that they were adopted.[3] On July 30, 381, the Bishop of Nyssa received the supreme honour of being named by Theodosius as one of the acknowledged authorities on all matters of theological orthodoxy, and he was appointed to regulate the affairs of the Churches in Asia Minor, conjointly with Helladius of Caesarea and Otreius of Melitene.[4] Communion with these bishops was to be regarded as the test of orthodoxy.

But few further particulars are known of the life of Gregory. We find that he was again in Constantinople in 383, when he preached his sermon on the Godhead of the Son and of the

[1] Elsewhere Jerome has a few phrases which point in the same direction as Gregory's treatise. He says, for instance, "Et de Britannia et de Hierosolymis aequaliter patet aula coelestis."

[2] Jer. *De Virr. illustr.* 128; Phot. *Cod.* 67. [3] Niceph. Call. *H. E.* xiii. 13.

[4] *Cod. Theod.* l. iii. t. vi. p. 9; Socrates, *H. E.* v. 8; Labbe, *Concil.* ii. 956.

Holy Ghost, and again in 385, for in that year he pronounced the funeral orations over the remains of the little Princess Pulcheria, and of her mother Flaccilla, the wife of Theodosius, who died shortly afterwards. At Constantinople he became acquainted with the noble deaconess Olympias, the friend of Chrysostom, and it was at her request that he began his commentary on the Song of Songs.

One of the chief trials of his later life arose from the rudeness and hostility of his metropolitan Helladius. This bishop was an unworthy successor of Basil, and we hear but little in his favour. He caused bitter offence to Gregory of Nazianzus, first by displacing Sacerdos, whom Basil had appointed governor of his great hospital, and afterwards by opposing the consecration of Eulalius, Gregory's successor at Nazianzus.[1] He incurred the strong displeasure of Ambrose and of Chrysostom by having appointed the adventurer Gerontius to the bishopric of Nicomedia.[2] This appointment was not only bad but scandalously simoniacal, for it was purchased by a place in the army which Gerontius, then a court favourite and quack physician at Constantinople, had procured for the son of Helladius.

Probably the jealousy of Helladius had been excited by the fact that Gregory, who was only bishop of the obscure town of Nyssa, had been named with himself as defining the rule of orthodoxy; nor is it at all unlikely that Gregory's simplicity and want of tact left Helladius under the impression that his colleague despised him, which was, indeed, not far from the truth. The alienation led, however, to a painful incident, which is described by Gregory in an indignant letter to Flavian. In the year 393 he visited Sebaste, to be present at the anniversary celebration of his brother Peter's death. Being informed that Helladius spoke of him with habitual bitterness, he thought it his duty to pay him a visit before returning to Nyssa. But on hearing that the primate was at a place in the mountains called Andomokinoe, keeping the Festival of Martyrs, he determined to wait until he could see him in Caesarea. Meanwhile a rumour reached him that Helladius was ill, and then without hesitation he left his vehicle, and with all the speed in his power, partly on foot, partly

[1] Greg. Naz. *Epp.*.ccxix. ccxx.

[2] Ambrose had censured Gerontius for spreading a story about a goblin with ass's legs—an Empusa (ὀνοσκελίς) who had attacked him one night, but whom he had seized, shaved, and flung into a mill! (see Sozom. *H. E.* viii. 6, Phot. *Cod.* 59).

on horseback, along precipitous roads, and travelling both by day and night a distance of many miles, he reached the place at dawn. From a mound which overhung the village he caught sight of Helladius with two other bishops preaching in the open air, and he and his attendants immediately dismounted and led their horses to the spot. Meanwhile the sermons had ended, and Helladius had returned home. Gregory despatched to him a messenger to announce his arrival, and gave the same message to one of Helladius's deacons, whom he accidentally met. Expecting an immediate answer to his announcement, he sat down in the open air, oppressed by fatigue and drowsiness, and the centre of a gaping and nudging group composed of the rustics of the place. In this condition he was left till noon, in spite of his weary journey and the burning heat, and he could not help feeling deeply depressed, and bitterly reproaching himself for having brought such indignities on his own head. At noon the "shrine," as Gregory calls it, was opened, and he was admitted into Helladius's presence, other visitors being excluded. He was so tired that his deacon had to support his footsteps. In this guise he saluted his metropolitan, and, as he was left-standing, and not even asked to take a seat, he went and sat down on a bench at a distance, waiting till some word of greeting should be addressed to him. "Not a word was uttered. There was a silence as of the night, a tragic gloom of countenance, amazement, and astonishment, and an absolute dumbness, and, as in some midnight gloom, there followed a speechless interval." Helladius did not so much as utter the most commonplace salutation, and "the stillness was as oppressive as among the dead. Nay, more so; for among the dead there are no small jealousies or inch-high distinctions." The scene was becoming intolerable. It was like breathing the murky atmosphere of a prison, especially when Gregory recalled his own high privileges, distinguished position, and universal fame. What had become of Christian humility and of the example of Christ's lowliness, who visited the house of the leper, and endured the traitor's kiss? Was Gregory a leper? Was Helladius so immeasurably his superior in rank, in intellect, in character, that he was entitled to display this sublime arrogance? It was with difficulty that the Bishop of Nyssa suppressed the natural indignation with which his heart began to swell, by reminding himself of what St. Paul says about the law in our members which wars against the law of our minds.

He asked Helladius whether his visit prevented him from taking refreshment, and whether he should retire? "I want no refreshment," rudely answered Helladius. Gregory replied in a few conciliatory words, in answer to which Helladius broke into a storm of reproaches against him. Gregory answered that he had been misled by false reports, and that so clear was his conscience on the subject of any wrongs to Helladius, that while he prayed that his other sins might be pardoned, he was quite content that anything which he had ever done against Helladius might remain unpardoned for ever. It was now time for the mid-day meal; the bath was being prepared, and an elegant banquet was being made ready, for the day was a Sabbath and a martyr's festival. But still Helladius gave no word of invitation to his tired and starving guest, who silently contrasted this haughty animosity with the merciful tenderness of the Lord. At last Gregory rose to go. The rain was falling fast when he left the house, and it was not till evening that he reached his comrades, wet through and utterly worn out. He was shocked and grieved that the Bishop of Caesarea should have been guilty of conduct so churlishly inhuman; and that towards a fellow-bishop, and one whom the Council of Constantinople had clothed with an authority equal to his own. Surely such inflated pride could only go before a terrible fall! But he leaves the punishment of it in God's hands: ὅπως δ' ἂν γένοιτο τοῦτο θεῷ μελήσει.[1]

There are no other incidents to record. We have no trace of Gregory after the year 394, in which he was present at Constantinople during the synod held at the consecration of the Church of Rufinus. On this occasion he preached at the request of Nectarius, the successor of Gregory of Nazianzus in the see of Constantinople.[2] We learn no particulars about his death, which probably took place in 395.

Gregory was in some respects the most gifted member of his gifted family. Of the practical ability which marked the distinguished career of Basil he was indeed entirely destitute. He was too simple and too good to cope with astute and intriguing ecclesiastics; but in originality and intellectual force he was not only greater than his brother, but greater than perhaps any of the Fathers except Origen, Athanasius, and Augustine.[3] Indeed

[1] *Ep.* i.

[2] The sermon sometimes called "On his Ordination" should be called "On the Consecration."

[3] See Böhringer, *Greg. von Nyssa*, 184.

this eminence was fully recognised, as is shown by the title "Father of Fathers," which was given to him by the seventh General Council. Two contrary streams of tendency are observable in his character—on the one hand a deep spirituality and a thorough independence, on the other submissive and superstitious credulity. His independence and spirituality are illustrated in his views on eschatology, and his vigorous disapproval of pilgrimages, so far as they were regarded as necessary or meritorious; his superstition in the ready credence with which he accepted the miracles wrought by the (often dubious) relics of martyrs, as well as those which he believed on hearsay to have been wrought at the grave of his sister Macrina. In his sermon "Against those who defer Baptism," he shows himself less liberal than Ambrose. In the case of Valentinian II., Ambrose argued that the sincere desire for baptism, if accidentally frustrated, practically secured the blessings of that sacrament. But Gregory tells a story of a young nobleman of Comana, named Archias, who, when shot to death by the Scythians, kept crying out in agony, "Mountains and rocks baptize me! woods and rocks give me the grace of the sacrament!" In his books *On Virginity* and his sermon on Gregory Thaumaturgus and on the Forty Martyrs he shows himself the unquestioning child of his age, eager to accept without enquiry its least tenable portents; yet in his theologic treatises he betrays his inability to accept any form of faith of which the foundations could not also be laid in the human reason. Like many other original thinkers, he is not always consecutive or consistent. Even on such fundamental propositions as those on which he based his eschatology he varies from himself. At one time he treats Evil much as was done by Erigena, as something non-existent, a pure negation, and on this conception he founds his Theodicaea; but when he is treating of the purification wrought by death, he speaks of Evil almost as if it were a veritable substance from which the body had to be cleansed by disintegration. Again, his ascetic proclivities make it very difficult for him to strike the balance between the glorification of celibacy and the honour due to marriage.

His theological views were more profoundly influenced by Origen than by any other teacher. His idealism, his allegorical exegesis, his doctrine of human freedom, his belief in the ultimate restitution of all things, were borrowed from the great Alexandrian. But even in his development of these views Gregory

was much more than a mere borrower. He was a close reasoner, and well acquainted with the science of his day.[1] He thought out each subject for himself, and he had the advantage of living in a period when the consciousness of the Church had arrived at more definite dogmatic conclusions than were possible in the days of Origen. In general his whole system of theology turned on the belief that the existing world is not the ideal world of God, but a world which has been ruined by the Fall; that the Fall was a consequence of man's freedom of will; and that the scheme of redemption was wrought out by a process both Divine and human, rendered possible by the Incarnation of Christ, who in this world of sin appeared as the negation of all evil, and the concentration of all good. And the redemptive process will continue until the material passes wholly into the spiritual, and the spiritual into the Divine.[2] Gregory, as Mons. Villemain says, was a mystic, but a mystic by the reasoning faculty only, a mystic without being an enthusiast. He has none of that Oriental colouring which charms us in some of the great orators of the Greek Church.[3]

The works of Gregory fall under five divisions—1. Dogmatic; 2. Exegetic; 3. Ascetic; 4. Orations; and 5. Letters.

1. Of these the dogmatic works are of the greatest importance. They are partly polemic and partly apologetic, and they place Gregory in the highest rank of theologians.

i. Of his polemical works the two chief are the great treatises against Eunomius and against Apollinaris, which are the main source from which we derive our knowledge of the views held by those heresiarchs.

ii. His chief apologetic work is the *Sermo Catecheticus*, which is a manual of theology of which the form was perhaps suggested by Origen's *De principiis*. It deals with the great questions of theology, Christology, and eschatology. He treated of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in his book *On the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, addressed to the tribune Simplicius, and also in brief works addressed to Ablavius and Eustathius. In an important

[1] In his *Hexaemeron* and *De Hom. opif.* [2] Böhringer, *ubi supra.*

[3] Villemain, *Tabl. de l'éloquence*, 125. Gregory of Nyssa was one of the earliest to express the well-known sentiment of the mystics—of which St. Theresa was so fond—that we ought to love God for His own sake without any slavish (δουλοπρεπῶς) reference either to the hope of recompense or the fear of torments. See *De Vit. Mos.* (*Opp.* i. 298), *ad finem.* The passage is a fine one, but is too long to quote.

little book, addressed to his brother Peter, he draws a distinction between *ousia* and *hypostasis*.[1] It was his express object to defend the orthodox doctrine against the charges both of tritheism and Sabellianism, maintaining against the Heathen the unity of the Divine essence, against the Jews the distinction of Persons. And yet, so difficult was it in the controversies of those days to steer between the colliding rocks of various heresies, that in some passages Gregory seems to have gone dangerously near to Monophysitism and the language of Eutyches.[2]

As regards Gregory's eschatology, it is distinctly based on the views of Plato and of Origen, which Gregory believed to be revealed in Scripture. He accepted without reserve or subterfuge the full statement of St. Paul that God should ultimately be *πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν*, "All things in all men and all things." He regarded death as a moment in the process of perfectionment, and in this respect his views closely resembled those arrived at by Dr. Pusey from a very opposite point of view. In death God deals with the clay as the potter does, breaking up the marred vessel, getting rid of its defective elements, and forming it anew—a simile which he hardly attempts to co-ordinate with his other opinion that evil is in reality a semblance, a thing which has no essential existence.[3] In answering the question as to the place of the soul's abode after its separation from the body, he dwells on the immaterial character of the soul, and, denying the existence of any local Hades, speaks of Hades as a metaphor descriptive of a state. It might be said that the disembodied soul is

[1] He admits that the two words were often confounded, but he prefers to keep *οὐσία* in the sense of Essence, and to use *ὑπόστασις* to express the distinctive peculiarity, making it equivalent to *πρόσωπον* or "Person." The Arians said that the Essence was different, because the Hypostases are different; the Sabellians say that "there can be only one Hypostasis because there is only one Essence." But the Essence (*οὐσία*) should be used for the common element; the Hypostases are the centres of unity of two distinctive peculiarities (*συνδρομὴ τῶν περὶ ἑκάστου ἰδιωμάτων*), and are incommunicable in relation to each other. See Dorner, *On the Person of Christ* (E.T.), ii. 314.

[2] See Neander, iv. 115 (E.T.) Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* v. liii. 2, ventured to doubt whether Gregory could have written the passage in his letter to Theophilus of Alexandria (in the *c. Apollin.*), in which he says that the humanity of Christ was lost in His Divinity like a drop of vinegar in the great ocean.

[3] Compare the lines which Mr. Browning puts into the mouth of the old Pope in *The Ring and the Book*. He says of the villain Guido Franceshini that possibly the stroke of death may flash saving conviction into him—

> "Else I avert my face nor follow him
> Into that sad obscure sequestered state,
> *Where God unmakes but to remake the soul*
> *He else made first in vain; which must not be.*"

with God; but Gregory imagines that it remains as a watcher of the material elements of its earthly organism. The dissolution of those elements offered no difficulty to Gregory, because he held that the immaterial soul could retain its observation of those elements however much scattered and however impalpable they might become. Hell and heaven are to him conditions and characters. He does not understand literally the worm and fire of future retribution, but considers that they are processes of ultimate purification, by which souls shall be saved so as by fire. He leaves this view side by side with his doctrine of the freedom of man's will, but holds fast his belief in the Palingenesia which shall involve the final disappearance of all sin, and all rebellion against God.[1] Germanus of Constantinople in his ἀνοθεντός, and others since his day, endeavoured to get rid of the disturbing circumstance that a canonised saint of the Church, a Father whose views were in his own day regarded as the norm of orthodoxy, a Father who was called Father of Fathers by the seventh General Council, a Father who exercised predominant influence in the second of the four great Œcumenical Councils, and had his share in the very clauses of the Nicene Creed which deal with the future life, was yet a declared Universalist. They tried to maintain that the passages in which this view is expressed were the interpolations of heretics. But this attempt is now abandoned. Neander regards it as "among the worst examples of arbitrary caprice, regardless of history."[2] There is no scholar of any weight in any school of theology who does not now admit that two at least of the three great Cappadocians believed in the final and universal restoration of human souls, though they said nothing of the two peculiar views of Origen which alone were condemned as heretical — namely, the Platonic doctrine of the Prae-existence of souls, and the salvability of the Spirit of Evil.[3] The fuller expression of Gregory's views on these subjects is found in *The Makrinia*, a treatise on the soul and the Resurrection, consisting chiefly of long speeches addressed to him by his sister to console him in the thought of Basil's death.[4] And the remarkable fact is that he developed these

[1] *Ap.* Phot. *Cod.* 233.

[2] Neander, *Ch. Hist.* iv. 456 (E.T.)

[3] See *De Hom. opif.* 28. Gregory also shows the independence of his Origenism by rejecting Origen's denial of a *bodily* resurrection. *In Cant. Hom.* 1.

[4] See *De anima, ad finem* (*Opp.* ed. Migne, iii. 159 and 103); *De Hom. opif.* 21; *Orat. Catech.* 8 and 35; *Hom. in* 1 *Cor. xv.* 28. I need not here print the

views without in any way imperilling his reputation for orthodoxy, and without the faintest reminder that he was deviating from the strictest paths of Catholic opinion.

2. The specific exegesis of Gregory is of but small value. He wrote an apologetic supplement to the *Hexaemeron* of Basil; a treatise On the Creation of Man; On the Superscriptions of the Psalms; On the Witch of Endor; and On 1 Cor. xv. 28. He also wrote homilies On the Beatitudes, On the Lord's Prayer, On Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, and the Life of Moses.

3. His chief ascetic work is the treatise On Virginity, of which I have already spoken.

4. His orations are the funeral panegyrics on Basil, Meletius, the Empress Flaccilla, the Princess Pulcheria; and the sermons On St. Stephen, the Forty Martyrs, St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, and St. Ephraem.[1] There are also a few moral sermons On Purity, On Harsh Censures, On Usury, and On Almsgiving, and others on the chief festivals, and against those who postpone baptism. Many of these contain interesting details and allusions, but the taste of Gregory was not superior to that of his contemporaries, and as a sacred orator he stands far below his brother Basil and his friend of Nazianzus in force and majesty. His illustrations, however, are sometimes striking and sometimes very lively. In his sermon "On the Consecration," in apologising for his inferiority to others who had filled the pulpit, he points out that the richness of gold is sometimes enhanced by a leaden foil, and pointing to the roof enriched with polychrome, he says, "Do you see this roof over your heads, how fair it is to look upon, how the gilding of it blooms with fretwork. Though it is all apparently of gold, yet it has been engraved with many encircling polygons of azure. What purpose of the artist was served by the azure? It was to throw out the gold into more vivid relief by the contrast. If then the azure mingled with the gold makes the brilliancy more striking, so too may the dark line of my address enhance the brightness of the previous orations."[2] In his sermon "On the Profession of a Christian" he illustrates the occasional self-betrayal of hypocrisy by a story

passages again, for I have done so in dealing specially with the opinions of the Fathers on these subjects (*Mercy and Judgment*, pp. 256-561).

[1] His orations against Arius and Sabellius, and against the Macedonians, belong to his theologic works. They were first published by A. Mai.

[2] *Opp.* ed. Migne, iii. 545.

on which few modern preachers would venture. He says that an ape which had been taught to wear a mask and to dance like a woman by a mountebank at Alexandria, instantly betrayed its true nature when one of the spectators flung some almonds on the stage.[1]

5. His letters are few—even after the addition of fourteen made to them by Zacagni in 1698, and of eight more by Caraccioli, in 1731—but they are full of charm and naturalness. The most important are the one to the monk Olympius which describes the life and death of his sister Macrina; the one to Flavian about the misconduct of Helladius;[2] those to the three ladies of Jerusalem;[3] and that "On those who visit Jerusalem."[4] His letter to Amphilochius, in which he describes a beautiful and elaborate chapel which he was building in honour of the martyrs, shows his technical knowledge of architecture, and is the most detailed account we possess of an ecclesiastical structure in the fourth century.[5] His twentieth letter, that to Adelphius, shows the romantic love of natural beauty which he shared with his brother and his namesake of Nazianzus. It describes a villa and garden in Galatia, named Vanota, and was written when he had retired to his bedroom after a delightful day spent amid the fascinations of the place. He declares it to be lovelier than the valley of the Peneus, or the Sicyonian plain, or the fabled islands of the blest. The river Halys flowed through the grounds "gleaming like a ribband of gold through a deep purple robe." Over the banks hung an oak-crowned hill, and the lower growth of brushwood came down to the plain. The fields were green with vines, of which some were at that time laden with rich bunches of grapes, while others still showed their green clusters. Chapels of the martyrs were erected in various places, and the villa buildings were of the finest description, surrounded by beds of flowers. Pears, apples, and peaches hung on the boughs of the fruit-trees, and banquets were laid out under the plains. In the fishponds were fish so tame that they came at the call of a youth, and allowed him readily to touch them. In the sunny portico, which was adorned with paintings, an elegant feast was laid out for the guests, and there they were again delighted with the gambols of the fish in a clear

[1] *Opp.* ed. Migne, iii. 239. Photius speaks highly of him as an orator, and Sophronius calls him a "river of words."
[2] *Ep.* i. (Migne).
[3] *Ep.* iii.
[4] *Ep.* ii.
[5] *Ep.* xxv.

lake. Gregory evidently felt a most genuine delight as he paced along the green where the trellised vines were intertwined with roses, where the birds were singing, and fruits of many kinds showed their bright and varied colouring. Doubtless he would have reckoned the quiet day in this lovely villa as among the happiest which he had ever spent.

NOTE TO p. 60.

A strange glimpse of the irregularities of the fourth century may be derived from the enactments of the Council of Gangra. The date of this council is uncertain, but it was probably held about 379, and was intended to check the errors and extravagances of the followers of Eustathius of Sebaste. We learn from its canons that there were some who not only blamed marriage, but said that a woman, living with her husband, *cannot be saved;* that others separated themselves from the communion of married priests, and refused to partake of elements which they consecrated; that they embraced a life of virginity from horror of the married state; and that they insulted married persons. We also find anathemas against women who, under pretence or religion, wore men's clothing, cut off their hair, and forsook their children. These canons are undoubtedly genuine, and are contained in the codes both of the Greek and Latin Churches.[1]

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[1] Labbe, *Conc.* ii. 413.

XV

ST. AMBROSE, BISHOP OF MILAN

"Ambrosius Mediolanensis, virtutum sanctus Episcopus, arx fidei, orator Catholicus."—COMITIS MARCELLINI, *ex Chron. Coss. Arcad. iv. et Honor. iii.*

"Et Mediolani mira omnia ; copia rerum
Innumerae cultaeque domus, faecunda virorum
Ingenia, antiqui mores."—AUSONIUS.

ST. AMBROSE in the West furnishes an almost exact counterpart of St. Basil in the East. Both were great ecclesiastical statesmen; both were men of high spiritual aims carried out with vigorous activity; both showed a fondness for power, combined with capacity for rule; both had a certain grandeur of personality, and what would be called by some a magnetic influence; both were dauntless defenders of orthodoxy against the Arians and the Emperors who had embraced the Arian heresy; both produced a permanent impression on the Church, but more by their lives than by their writings. They knew and respected each

EDITIONS OF THE WORKS OF ST. AMBROSE.

Amerbach, Basle, 1492 ; Erasmus, Basle, 1527 ; the Roman (begun by Pope Sixtus V. when a monk), Rome, 1580-5 ; the Benedictine, Paris, 1686-1690 ; Venice, 4 vols. 1748-51, 8 vols. 1781 ; Migne, 2 vols. 1843 ; Angelo Ballerini, Mediol. 1875 (a fine edition, founded on the Benedictine). My references will be to the Benedictine edition, Paris, 1686-1690.

LIVES OF ST. AMBROSE.

Paulini, *Vita S. Ambrosii ;* Tillemont, *Mémoires*, vol. x. Venice, 1732 ; Du Pin, *Nouv. Bibl.* ii. ; Baronius, *Annales* (printed in the Roman edition) ; Gibbon, *Decline and Fall ;* the Benedictine, *Vita Ambrosii ex ejus potissimum scriptis collecta* (in Migne, vol. ii.) ; Cave, *Lives of the Primitive Fathers*, London, 1683 (ii. 359-440) ; Alban Butler, *Lives of the Saints* (Dec. 7) ; Barnard, *Der Heil. Ambrosius*, 1873 ; Böhringer, *Die Alte Kirche, Ambros. Erzbischof v. Mailand.* Stuttgart, 1877 ; Silbert, *Das Leben des Heiligen Ambrosius*, Wien, 1841 ; Hermant, Paris, 1678 ; Förster, *Ambrosius Bischof von Mailand.* Halle, 1884 ; J. Ll. Davies, in *Dict. of Christian Biography ;* Plitt, in Herzog's *Encyclop.* (ed^{n}· 2).

other. In calm gravity and perfect straightforwardness Ambrose was the superior, although he was very far inferior to the great Bishop of Caesarea in depth and originality of thought. Basil recognised in Ambrose a kindred character, and Ambrose made large use of the works of Basil. The Western Church received for centuries the stamp of this commanding character. Gregory VII. was in many respects a follower of Ambrose, and centuries afterwards another sainted Archbishop of Milan, St. Carlo Borromeo, felt his influence and reproduced some both of his errors and of his virtues.

Ambrose was born about the year 340.[1] He was the scion of an illustrious family—perhaps the *Gens Aurelia*—which boasted Consuls and Praetors among its ancestors, and which had embraced Christianity for several generations. His father, also named Ambrosius, was Praetorian Praefect of the Gauls, and in that capacity occupied one of the four highest administrative posts in the Empire, and exercised all but supreme power over a large part of Europe. There is no trace in the writings of Ambrose that he felt any pride in this noble birth, but there is no doubt that to it was due in part his habit of command, and that stamp of distinction and superiority which characterised his whole tone of mind, and made him "the last of the Romans" in a truer sense than many to whom the title has been given. On the other hand, he gloried in the fact that among the circle of his family he could count a martyr—his great-aunt Sotheris, who had suffered for her faith in the Diocletian persecution.

Ambrose was probably born at Trèves, the headquarters of his father's Gallic praefecture.[2] He was the third of three children. The eldest was his sister Marcellina, of whom he draws a picture in his third book *On Virgins*;[3] the second was Satyrus, also called Uranius, who became a Roman lawyer of great eloquence and distinction,[4] and rose to be governor of a province, which he administered with conspicuous gentleness and justice.[5] The three children of the noble Praefect were united to each

[1] The chief *datum* for his birth is slight. In *Ep.* lix. 3 he says he was fifty-three, and that while Campania is quiet, "nos . . . in medio versamur omnium molestiarum freto." This suits well with the year 393, when Arbogast and his puppet Eugenius entered Milan. If this date be rightly fixed, Ambrose was born in 340, three years after the death of Constantine.

[2] *Exhort. Virg.* 12, sec. 82; *De Virg.* iii. 7, sec. 39.

[3] Basil, *Ep. ad Ambros.* Paulin, *Vit. Ambrose.*

[4] *De Virg.* iii. 4, sec. 15 *sqq.* [5] *De excessu Satyri*, 49.

other by the closest bonds of affection, which continued unbroken throughout their lives.

A life of Ambrose was written by his pupil and secretary Paulinus, who must have had the fullest opportunity of knowing him.[1] But this biography is perhaps interpolated, and the value of it is greatly impaired by the feeble credulity which led ecclesiastics of that age to find miracles everywhere. The reader of Paulinus is embarrassed on almost every page by supernatural events narrated without any adequate testimony, which he is either forced to throw aside altogether as being wholly devoid of an historical character, or to regard as superstitious exaggerations and inaccurate distortions of natural events. In this biography, as in those of the hermits and many mediaeval saints, we are repelled by the uncertainty thrown over the simplest facts from their being found in contact with absurd prodigies: Paulinus begins with a story of this kind. He says that while the infant Ambrose was lying in his cradle, asleep and open-mouthed, a swarm of bees settled on his face, and crept in and out of his open mouth! The Praefect, who was walking in the courtyard with his wife and daughter, observed the circumstance, and forbidding the nurse to drive the bees away, waited for the issue of the miracle. After some time the bees soared up into the air so high that no gaze could follow them. "Terrified by this portent, the father exclaimed, 'If that little child lives he will be something great.' For even then the Lord, in the infancy of his little servant, was working for the fulfilment of that text of Proverbs, '*Favi mellis sermones boni.*'[2] For that swarm of bees was generating for us the honeycombs of his writings, which should announce celestial gifts and uplift the minds of men from earthly things to heaven." Thus does Paulinus at once furnish us with a measure of his qualifications! The story, as he tells it, is absurd on the face of it. It is told of Plato and many others, and is a simple specimen of rhetoric and metaphor translated into impossible and prosaic fact.

[1] Paulinus (not to be confounded with Paulinus of Nola) had also opportunities for securing the best information from Marcellina, the sister of Ambrose, and others. But he was too credulous and too exclusively eulogistic, and Förster thinks that there are interpolations in his work as late as the eighth century. The Church historians—Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret—add but little of what is new, and cannot be always relied upon. Of modern historians, Gibbon is very unjust to Ambrose. There are notices of him in Richter, *Gesch. d. Weström. Reiches*, and Güldenpenning u. Ifland. *d. Kaiser Theodosius*, 1878.

[2] Prov. xvi. 24, "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb."

The elder Ambrose died about A.D. 352, when his younger son was but twelve years old. His widow—whose name has not been preserved—left Trèves with her family and went to Rome. Here Marcellina took the vow of virginity, and received the veil at the hands of Pope Liberius.[1] Ambrose was deeply attached to his sister, and it was no doubt from love of her that he derived that intense admiration for the virgin life which led him to found so many nunneries and to write so largely on the subject. He was trained at Rome in all the branches of a liberal education, especially in grammar, jurisprudence, and rhetoric, with a view to the same civil career in which his father and many of his ancestors had gained distinction. The natural seriousness and dignity of his character, together with the sweet and ennobling influences of a Christian home, saved him from those dissipations of great cities into which Jerome fell in Rome and Augustine in Carthage. The life of the noble Roman boy was not only pure but earnest, nor did he deign to mix himself up with the tricks and tumults of the young students. Only one anecdote of his youth is preserved to us. His mother lived with Marcellina and another virgin named Candida. The caste character which had already begun to be assumed by the presbyterate had led to the custom of women kissing the hands of the clergy when they parted from them. One day when the three ladies had kissed the outstretched hand of a clerical visitor, the boy extended his right hand to Candida, and playfully said, "Kiss my right hand too, for I too shall be a bishop."[2] His sister rejected the offer, but, says Paulinus in his solemn style, "the spirit of the Lord, who was nurturing him for the priesthood, was speaking in him."

In his youth, as well as in later years, he must have been a diligent student of Pagan authors. Virgil seems to have been his special favourite, for he constantly uses his words and phrases as well as direct quotations from him.[3] Fortunately for his future work he was also well trained in Greek literature.

When his studies were over, Ambrose entered on his profession as a lawyer, and, aided by his connexions and his ability as a speaker, rose so rapidly that Probus, the Praetorian Praefect

[1] *De Virg.* iii. 1, sec. 1.

[2] This probably occurred in 353, when Ambrose was thirteen.

[3] See Wordsworth, *Ch. Hist.* iii. 70, who quotes Biraghi, "Ambrogio con singolar passione studiato aveva Virgilio, di cui è *perpetuo sfioratore.*"

of Italy, made him one of his assessors. When he was but thirty years old Probus was so much struck with his administrative gifts that he recommended him to the Emperor Valentinian I. for the post of Governor of the provinces of Liguria and Aemilia, which conferred on him the rank and ensigns of a proconsul. His predecessors in the office had acted oppressively, and Probus said to Ambrose when he started for his province, "Go; act not as a judge but as a bishop." These words were afterwards regarded in the light of a prophecy, but they are somewhat surprising on the lips of so doubtful a personage as the Praefect Probus.[1]

He administered this office with integrity and distinction for four years. In 374 Auxentius, the Arian Bishop of Milan, died.[2] He owed his post to the Arian Constantius, who had banished the orthodox bishop Dionysius in 355. Auxentius had been the chief supporter of Arianism in the West, and on his death the Arians and the Catholics naturally made supreme efforts that his successor should be one of their own party. It was the duty of Ambrose to preside at the election, and to suppress the tumults which on such occasions frequently ended in massacre. He went to the church, and while he was addressing the people on the duty of maintaining order, a voice was suddenly heard—Paulinus says that it was the voice of a child—exclaiming, "Ambrosius bishop!"[3] Ambrose was very popular as a governor. The adherents of both sides knew that in him they would have a firm, upright, and able prelate. They knew also that he possessed ample domains, and that if he were elected these would become the property of the Church. His high rank, distinguished birth, and pure life had won him universal respect, and, accepting the child's voice as a Divine intimation, Arians and Catholics alike with marvellous unanimity exclaimed, "Ambrosius bishop! Ambrosius bishop!"

Ambrose was overwhelmed with astonishment. He was not yet baptized; he was only a catechumen; he was but thirty-four; he had risen while yet a youth to the highest civil functions; he had never thought of entering the ranks of the clergy. There

[1] On Probus, see Amm. Marc. xxvii. 11: "insidiator dirus . . . cupiditates immensas"; xxx. 5, "plus adulationi quam verecundiae dedit."

[2] The orthodox bishop Dionysius died in exile the same year.

[3] Similar incidents have occurred at the election of American Presidents, and not unfrequently at that of Popes.

can be no doubt that his reluctance to become a bishop was sincere, and his opposition to the popular demand strenuous; but whether he really took any of the steps attributed to him by his weak biographer must remain doubtful. According to him, Ambrose first wished to escape by leaving the church, ascending his Proconsular tribunal, and (contrary to his custom) ordering some of the accused to be put to the torture in order to persuade the people that he was cruel. But the people only shouted, "Your sin be upon us!" because, says Paulinus, they knew that all his sins would be washed away when he was baptized. Then he pretended a wish to become a philosopher, but this also failed. Then—and this is the lowest depth of his secretary's absurdity—he ordered women of notorious character to be publicly brought to his palace that the people might see them and withdraw their choice. They, however, still persisted in shouting, "Your sin be upon us!" He then made preparation to fly at midnight to Ticinum, and imagined that he was on the way thither, but next morning found himself at the Roman gate of Milan.[1] Here he was seized by the people and kept under guard till the election was referred to the Emperor. Valentinian and Probus alike approved warmly of the choice, but meanwhile Ambrose had again fled and had hidden himself in a country-house belonging to an illustrious citizen of Milan named Leontius. Leontius, yielding to the pressure of the general desire, betrayed his hiding-place. Ambrose was taken back to Milan, and determined no longer to resist what he now saw to be the call of God. How much of this story is true the reader must decide for himself. Some of it—like many incidents in the work of Paulinus—is nothing better than morbid and monkish fiction. Ambrose doubtless endeavoured, as did Chrysostom, to avoid what he regarded as an awful burden; but he would not have belied the manly gravity of his whole nature by taking the unworthy and immoral steps which his secretary ascribes to him.

Accordingly Ambrose was baptized, taking care that the ceremony should be performed by an orthodox bishop. Passing through the various ecclesiastical offices in succession, he was consecrated bishop on Dec. 7, 374, eight days after his baptism.

[1] This accident is not impossible. It happened to a friend of my own, who, starting at night from Cambridge to walk to London, walked all night, and, having taken wrong turns, found himself next morning entering Cambridge by another road.

When next he visited Rome, he went to see his sister and Candida—for meanwhile his mother had died; and when Candida kissed his hand, he reminded her of his boyish remark, and said, "See! as I used to tell you, you are kissing the hand of a priest!"

The bishops of the Eastern and Western Churches alike approved of the consecration of Ambrose, regarding his case as exceptional.[1] The letter written by Basil in answer to his formal announcement is still extant. He "thanks God for the election. God, who had made a prophet out of the herdsman Amos, had now made a bishop of Ambrose, a man of noble birth, of high office, of lofty character, and of astonishing eloquence, who nevertheless despised all these earthly distinctions that he might win Christ. . . . Take courage, then, O man of God!"[2]

So, with one bound, the Governor of Milan had become the Bishop of her Church. Both parties had called him to his office with perfect confidence in his ability and experience. The change of position, as we see in the case of many ecclesiastics who have also been statesmen, was not without its perils. Ambrose had had at least eleven predecessors in the see,[3] and, since the days of Maximian, the Church of Milan had produced many martyrs, among whom was St. Sebastian.[4] But it had been governed for twenty years by an Arian, and the importance of the Church was exceptional at this moment, both because its bishop was a metropolitan and because Rome had been distracted by the raging factions of Damasus and Ursinus. He dedicated himself at once, heart and soul, to the duties of his office, and, as a preliminary step, at once got rid of all worldly cares by distributing his possessions. The silver and gold was assigned to the poor. The estates were given to the Church, the usufruct alone being reserved for his sister as long as she lived. The administration of his household and of all his concerns was handed over to Satyrus, who, with true brotherly affection, had left the brilliant

[1] *Ep.* lxiii. sec. 65. It is true that the ordination was formally uncanonical, but the canon of the Nicene Council had made a special exception when the nomination was divinely directed (ἐκ τινος θείου) or a θεία ψῆφος. See Cave, *Lives of the Fathers*, ii. 363.

[2] Basil, *Ep.* lv.

[3] Romish tradition says that the first Bishop of Milan was Barnabas, and that there had been fourteen bishops before Ambrose. On the general history of the Church of Milan, see Förster, *Ambrosius*, pp., 1-7. He refers to Pertz, *Monument. German.*; Ughelli, *Italia Sacra* (Venice, 1719); Muratori, *Annali d'Italia*, ii. (1762); Rihamonti, *Hist. Eccles. Mediol.*, etc.

[4] *In. Ps.* 119, *exp.* xx. 44: "Hic Mediolanensis oriundus est."

career which was opening before him at Rome to govern the house and support the sacred position of his younger brother.[1] The Roman world of that day was a distracted, a perishing, an afflicted world ; it had need of the support of men who were true Christians, and yet had in them the strong fibre of the old Roman dignity and courage.

He at once became a most diligent student. He frankly confesses that, as he had been snatched from the tribunal to the episcopate, he had received little or no theological training and had to learn while he was teaching.[2] He had probably been taught the truths of religion as a youth in Rome by Simplicianus, whom he had loved as his father, and who now came to help him at Milan, and ultimately became his successor. Augustine describes the bishop sitting in his house during the brief intervals of incessant business with his eyes fixed on his book, and oblivious of everything which was going on around him.[3] Sometimes Ambrose felt it necessary to retire into country solitude, and he used to quote the saying of Cicero, that "he never felt less alone than when he was alone, nor less at leisure than when at leisure."[4] He fasted continually, but not ostentatiously, or when he was exercising hospitality to strangers. When first appointed, he used to receive numbers of invitations, but he declined them all because he wished to give no countenance to luxury. Yet he considered it a duty to exercise hospitality, and received the greatest functionaries at his house, because he thought it desirable, in the interests of the Church, to keep on friendly relations with such persons. He worked at his ordinary episcopal duties so strenuously that on Easter Eve he baptized as many catechumens as would have wearied five ordinary bishops. He received the holy communion daily. On Sundays he always preached once, sometimes twice.[5] He devoted a great part of the night to prayer, meditation, and authorship—which latter he regarded as one of his obvious duties.[6] He was so successful in

[1] *De excess. Sat.* 20, 25.

[2] *De offic.* i. 1, sec. 4 : "*Ut prius docere inciperem quam discere.*"

[3] Aug. *Conf.* vi. 3, sec. 3 : "Sic eum legentem vidimus tacite et aliter nunquam : sedentesque in diuturno silentio . . . discedebamus." Comp. *Epp.* xxix. xlvii.

[4] *De bono mortis*, ch. 3, sec. 11 ; *Ep.* xlix.

[5] Aug. *Conf.* l. c. Ambr. *Admon. in libr. de Mysteriis.* For the effect produced by his sermons on the mind of Augustine, see *Conf.* v. 13 ; vi. 1, sec. 8 ; *c. Julian. Pelag.* i. 3 ; *De doctr. Christ.* iv. 46-50. His style was calm, ornate, dignified ; but there is a certain crudity about some of his earlier writings.

[6] *Epp.* xxix. 1, xlvii. 1 ; *De offic.* i. 1, sec. 3.

his dealings with heretics that Arianism almost ceased to exist in his diocese. He was specially solicitous about the preparation of catechumens, and not a few of his books are founded on the addresses which he delivered to them. The poor found in him a protector and a friend. He regarded them as his stewards and treasurers.[1] The deplorable confusion of the times, especially after the battle of Adrianople, caused many Romans to become prisoners of their enemies. Ambrose felt a peculiar pity for these unfortunates, and especially for those who fell into the brutal hands of the Taifals. He spent large sums in paying their ransom, and did not hesitate to sell or melt even the Church plate to provide funds for this purpose. When the Arians charged him with sacrilege on this account, because they were glad of any excuse for attacking him, he asked them, "Which they considered to be the more valuable, Church vessels or living souls, and whether the validity of the sacraments depended on the gold of the chalice and pattens?"[2] He was also industrious in extending the growth of nunneries, and he had not been consecrated three years before virgins came to Milan from Placentia, from Bologna, and even from Mauretania, to receive the veil from his hands.[3] His writings on virginity were largely inspired by those of Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, whom he held in the highest estimation.

Augustine gives us a delightful glimpse of the daily life of Ambrose. The first thing in the morning, after his private devotions, he used to perform the daily service and administer the Holy Communion. This done, he sat down to read at a table in his hall, eagerly studying the Scriptures by the aid of the Greek commentators, and especially of Origen and Hippolytus, and of his contemporaries Didymus and Basil. He also read the works of Plato with warm admiration. His doors were always open, and his time belonged to the community in general. Every one might see, and every one might consult him. When any one came to ask his aid he instantly left off reading, gave his whole attention to the case, and then plunged once more into his studies, without troubling himself with the fact that many of his visitors lingered about the room, and watched him at his work with idle curiosity. He fasted every day till the evening, except twice

[1] *Ep.* xviii. 16: "Possessio ecclesiae sumtus est egenorum."

[2] *De offic.* ii. 28, sec. 136: "In invidiam incidimus quod confligerimus vasa mystica, ut captivos redimeremus."

[3] *De Virg.* i. ch. x. sec. 57.

a week. When his one meal was over, he sat down to write his sermons and his books, but unlike most of his contemporaries, he wrote everything with his own hand because he did not think it right to burden others with the wakefulness of the long hours of night. Augustine himself was anxious to ask his advice on many points of importance, but when he saw him thus absorbed in incessant duties, he hung back with modest reserve and was unwilling to interrupt the diligence which knew no real leisure. He only ventured to ask him about minor questions which did not require a moment to answer.[1]

The Roman sternness and dignity in the character of Ambrose led him to use the sacredness of his office to serve the best ends of the old tribunes of the people. His bearing towards the barbarians was that of a Roman senator as well as of a Christian bishop. All other institutions might be reeling in the shocks of earthquake, but while the surge of the sea was roaring, and men's hearts were failing them for fear, he determined that the Church at any rate should be a rock of defence for the miserable and the oppressed. Very early in his episcopate he showed his dauntless independence by addressing the soldier-emperor, Valentinian I., in church, and pointing out to him the misdeeds of ministers who abused the imperial authority. "I knew long ago," replied the Emperor, "your independent spirit; yet, so far from opposing, I approved of your election. Henceforth apply your medicine to the faults of our souls, as the divine law ordains."[2] We read in the heathen historian of the singular savagery which marked the character of Valentinian I. Among other marks of his cruelty, we are told that he kept two bears which were fed on human flesh. He called them *Mica Aurea*, "golden flake," and *Innocentia*, and kept them with extreme care in dens near his own bedchamber. Innocentia devoured so many corpses that at last Valentinian, from an impulse of gratitude, allowed her to be turned loose in her native woods.[3] On one occasion he ordered the hand of a poor young groom to be cut off because it had come in contact with him while the youth was trying to hold a rearing horse. On another he executed a skilled workman because a steel corselet was a trifle under weight. Such was the temper of

[1] Aug. *Conf.* vi. 3, *Ep.* xlvii. 1.

[2] Theodoret, *H. E.* iv. 7.

[3] Amm. Marc. xxix. 3, sec. 9. Valentinian became more savage and morose as his reign advanced (Zosimus, iv. 16).

the man whom Ambrose, at the very beginning of his career, ventured to confront with perfect boldness. But there must have been elements in the character of the Emperor which would lead him to admire Ambrose. He had himself torn off a part of his uniform, under Julian, when a priest of Jupiter had accidentally sprinkled him with lustral water.

Ambrose was a strong opponent of heresy. If the Arians, in promoting his election, had imagined that, as a man of the world, he would be ready to treat them with a politic tolerance, they were mistaken. He would not be baptized by any of their faction, and from the first he discountenanced their views to the utmost of his power. When Valentinian I. died, in 375, he left two sons—Gratian, aged seventeen, and Valentinian II., aged four. In 378 the Arian Valens met his fearful end in the battle against the Goths at Adrianople. Hearing of his uncle's danger, Gratian marched to his assistance, and Valens had hastened the battle because he envied Gratian's reputation and did not wish him to share in the expected victory. Gratian, just before starting—since he was going to aid an Arian Emperor—begged Ambrose to write him a book of instructions in the faith. Ambrose, "though preferring to exhort to the faith than to discuss it," sent him the first two books of his *De Fide*, to which the young Emperor attached the utmost value. Gratian had also requested him to write "On the Holy Spirit." He was unable to do so at the time, but subsequently composed his treatise on the subject, in which he was greatly indebted to the works of Didymus and Basil. Ambrose was always allowed ready access to the Emperor when he was at Milan. On one occasion he went to intercede for a Pagan, who, in a fit of anger, had abused Gratian, and called him unworthy of his father. He was refused access by the chamberlain, Macedonius, and said to him, "You too shall come to the church, and shall find no means of entering it." The prophecy was afterwards fulfilled, and meanwhile Ambrose got into the palace by a secret gate, with some of the Emperor's huntsmen, and gained his point.[1] After the death of Valens, the gentle and amiable Gratian, thinking it impossible for him to support the weight of the double Empire of the East and West, had summoned Theodosius from the Spanish farm to which he had been driven by the cabals which had ruined his father, and had invested him with the purple on Jan. 19, 379. It was much

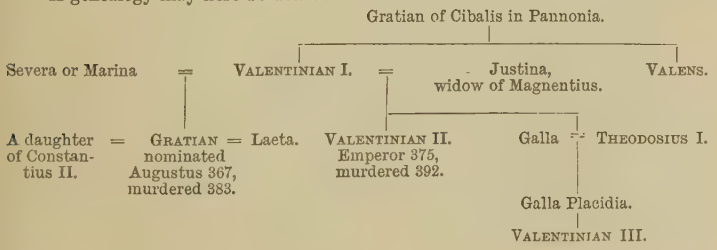
[1] The story rests on the authority of Paulinus, *Vit. Ambr.* 37.

to his credit that he took this resolve, in which the charming and well-educated boy, as Niebuhr calls him, almost rose to the level of a great man. He was largely under the influence of Ambrose, and he refused the *robe* of Pontifex Maximus, though he clung to the title, just as Henry VIII. clung to the title of Defender of the Faith.[1] The omen-loving multitude afterwards recalled the speech of the priest who brought the robe, "There will, nevertheless, soon be a Pontifex Maximus": words which they applied to the usurper by whose rebellion Gratian fell.

The Catholics placed their highest hopes in the known orthodoxy of Theodosius, but the Arians relied on the influence of Justina, the mother of the younger Valentinian. She was a vehement Arian, although Valentinian I., who married her for her beauty, had compelled her, during his lifetime, to conform to the Nicene faith. She revenged herself for this enforced obedience by warmly espousing the cause of the heretics after her husband's death. This brought her into immediate conflict with the Bishop of Milan.

Sirmium, the capital of Illyria, had long been governed by Arian bishops, and when a vacancy occurred in 380, Justina, who seems to have been residing there at the time, did her utmost to secure another Arian election. She was defeated by the energy of Ambrose, who at once hastened to the town, and by his influence carried the consecration of the orthodox Anemius. Justina tried to terrify him by a show of armed force, but he defied the soldiery, and extricated himself by calm courage from a yet more pressing danger. Ambrose had mounted the tribunal in the Church of Sirmium, when one of the Arian virgins, "more impudent," says Paulinus, "than the rest," followed him, seized hold of his robe, and tried to drag him to that part of the church where the other virgins were seated, who, almost

[1] A genealogy may here be useful.



with the fanaticism of monks, were prepared to beat him and drive him out of the sacred precincts. But the holy virago was daunted by the bearing of the prelate. "I," he said, "am unworthy of this high office, but it is unbecoming alike to you and to your profession to lay hands on any priest whatever. You ought to be afraid of the judgment of God, lest some harm should happen to you. The virgin, according to Paulinus, died a day or two afterwards, and Ambrose himself, repaying evil with good, performed the funeral ceremony; but the incident struck terror into the Church of Sirmium, and greatly assisted Ambrose in his effort to defeat the Arian candidate.[1]

Nor was he less successful in thwarting the attempt of the Arian bishops Palladius and Secundinus, who had tried to induce Gratian to summon an Œcumenical Council, in the hopes that by the aid of Eastern Arians they might revive the Arianism of the West. The council was confined to the West, and arranged very much as Ambrose directed. Only a small number of bishops met at Aquileia, but they were all orthodox. The two Arian bishops and a presbyter named Attalus were deposed. This was in 381. The council seems to have done little else, but was deceived by Maximus the cynic "philosopher," who had procured a surreptitious consecration of himself as Bishop of Constantinople, until Theodosius set them right on that matter.[2] But the peaceful unanimity of the bishops at Aquileia, compared with the wild dissensions of those at Constantinople, enables us to measure the force of the influence of Ambrose as compared with the shrinking fastidiousness of Gregory of Nazianzus. Theodosius declined, with a gentle reproof, the demand of the Western bishops for a council at Rome to decide the affairs of Antioch and the East, telling them that they were ill acquainted with the real points at issue. The only Eastern bishops who went to the council at Rome in 382 were Paulinus, Epiphanius, and Acholius of Thessalonica. Ambrose seems to have gone to Rome, but he was detained in bed for many months by an illness, so that he

[1] If we can accept the authority of Paulinus, two of the Emperor's Arian chamberlains challenged him to a discussion of the Incarnation in the church. He was present at the appointed time, and, though the young men did not appear, he delivered the sermon found in his works. The two chamberlains had purposely gone out for a ride. Their horses fell, and both of them were killed on the spot.

[2] See *Ep.* xiii. 5. Ambrose subsequently recognised his mistake. The acts of the Council of Aquileia are often published among the letters of Ambrose on Maximus. See *supra*, i. 482, 485.

took no part in the deliberations. There he may have met Jerome, and there he formed a close friendship with Acholius, who had baptized Theodosius in 380. On his death in 383 Ambrose wrote a letter of condolence to his Church, in which he speaks of him with the highest regard.[1]

Ambrose had suffered a severe domestic calamity in the death of his brother Satyrus in 379. Shortly after his consecration as bishop, a man named Prosperus, thinking perhaps that he would have no more time to look after his affairs, had defrauded him of a part of his patrimony, and sailed away. Satyrus was determined that under his administration his brother should not be a loser, and, in spite of the remonstrances of Ambrose, he sailed in pursuit of the defaulter, though it was winter, and the only available ship was wholly unseaworthy. The ship ran upon shoals and instantly went to pieces. Satyrus had not yet been baptized, but, sharing the superstitious view of the sacraments which was then common, he begged some of those who had been baptized to give him the sacred elements by way of a magic amulet. These he tied in a napkin (*orarium*), hung it round his neck, and flung himself into the sea.[2] He was the first to be saved, and, after having helped to rescue others from danger, he immediately sought for baptism, refusing, however, to accept it at the hands of a Luciferian schismatic. The grace of this baptism, says Ambrose, he never lost.[3] After this he fell seriously ill, and Ambrose also; for so close was the bond between the brothers that it was noticed that their feelings seem to have been communicated to each other by secret sympathy, and that when one was ill the other felt ill also. Marcellina came from Rome to nurse Ambrose, and the two were deeply distressed with anxiety about Satyrus. He recovered, in consequence of a vow to the martyr St. Lawrence; and Ambrose is only grieved to think that he did not also ask for long life, which he might have gained as easily as recovery from sickness.[4] As soon as he was able he returned to Italy, and Symmachus, who treated him like a son, would not let him go on to Milan, because Italy was in danger of immediate invasion by the usurper Maximus. After a short time Satyrus braved this

[1] See *Epp.* xv. xvi.

[2] *De excess. Sat.* 24, 36-43. On the *orarium*, see the note of the Benedictine editors (*Opp.* ii. 1125), and comp. *Ep.* xxii. 9.

[3] Id. 52.

[4] Id. 17.

danger, and made his way to Milan. But his constitution had been weakened by all that he had gone through; he was seized with a fatal illness, and in a few days he was dead. It seemed as if his life had been prolonged for the sole object of seeing once again his brother and sister. Their grief was very great, and Ambrose found it hard so far to control his grief as to pronounce in his honour the tender and pathetic oration which is still extant. It was delivered before a vast assembly, with the corpse lying before him in the church, its face uncovered. Seven days afterwards, in another oration at the funeral, he dwelt upon the way in which we should bear the death of those whom we love. Satyrus had refused to make any will, so that his great wealth came to Ambrose and Marcellina. They would not regard themselves as the heirs, but only as the stewards of it, and thought that they could render no higher service to their beloved brother than by distributing it among the poor.[1]

Gratian was deprived of the personal aid of Theodosius, because the latter was fully occupied with the troubles of the East, and had his headquarters at Thessalonica. He himself lingered in Trèves, and ceasing to rule, allowed business to take its course. He was charged by his enemies with too great devotion to the useless pleasures of the chase, and gave deep offence by his partiality for the Franks and for Frankish manners. He was, in fact, the earliest victim of the jealousy of Romans against Germans. Under these circumstances the Spaniard Maximus, who had the command of the army in Britain, was saluted Emperor by his soldiers, and crossed over into Gaul. Abandoned and betrayed, Gratian fled to Lyons, where he was seized and murdered by the Governor Andragathius (Aug. 25, 383). He was only twenty-four, and had reigned seven years and nine months. During the years 378-381 he had lived at Milan, leaning on the strong arm of Ambrose and passing many religious laws in which the bishop's hand is visible. Ambrose in many passages of his writings deplores his untimely murder, and tells us that in his last days the unhappy young man constantly referred to him and called him by his name.[2]

[1] In his sermon (*De excess. Sat.* 38) he describes the likeness which often caused them to be mistaken the one for the other, and (id. 23) the eager way in which they used to converse together. "Quis te aspexit, qui non me visum putaret?"

[2] *De obit. Valent.* 39, 79: "Tu in tuis extremis me requirebas." In the *Apologia Prophetae David* and in *Enarr. ad Psalm lxii.* 22 the stories given of the

Theodosius was too much occupied at the time to avenge his death, but Maximus made him a promise that he would confine himself to the Praefecture of Gaul, and would leave Valentinian II. in undisturbed possession of Africa, Italy, and western Illyria. Justina, in the first agony of grief and terror, turned instinctively to Ambrose as the one brave and strong man among all her subjects who would be best able to help her and her young son. She came to him in tears, placed her boy in his arms, and entreated him to go as an ambassador to Maximus.[1] No ambassador would be more likely to carry weight than a man of such commanding character, who united the dignity and eloquence of a great Roman official with the sacred character of a bishop. The task was not without peril, for every one felt that Maximus at the best would only bide his time. Ambrose, however, went to Trèves. Maximus on his arrival refused to see him privately, and would only give him an audience in public; and Ambrose, for the common good, tolerated the indignity, which was the more galling because Valentinian had sent back unharmed Marcellinus, the brother of Maximus, who was in his power. Ambrose was met by the complaint that Justina and Valentinian had not come in person.[2] He pointed out the unreasonableness of the demand that a widow and a boy should be asked to take a long journey over the Alps during a severe winter; but, as Maximus determined to send Count Victor as an ambassador to Milan, Ambrose was obliged to await his return and to spend the winter in Trèves.[3] On this occasion he showed the inflexible grandeur of his religious ideal. Maximus desired to join him in the Holy Communion.[4] It would have been an advantage to the usurper, and a lesser man than Ambrose might well have imagined that it would be in all respects a politic concession. But Ambrose refused to communicate with Maximus, whom he well knew to have been guilty of having shed the innocent blood of his master Gratian. He further refused to

manner of his death differ considerably. One was that he had been stabbed by Andragathius, Maximus's master of the horse. Ambrose says: "Ille inter convivia, dapes, et pocula constitutus innocentis convivae necem moliebatur."

[1] *De obit. Valent.* 28.

[2] "En vrai parvenu il voulait se donner la jouissance d'humilier sa victime tout en l'épargnant, et de voir à ses pieds le fils de son ancien maître" (De Broglie, vi. 54).

[3] *Ep.* xxiv. 7.

[4] It is probable that these circumstances belong to the *second*, not to the first embassy of Ambrose. See *infra*, p. 116.

communicate with his clergy—the followers of the Spanish bishops Ithacius and Idatius—who, to the indignation of the great prelate, had been the first Christians to imbrue their hands in the blood of brethren whose opinions differed from their own.[1] Ambrose hated heresy as much as they did. He did not feel the least sympathy with the Priscillianists in their asserted errors. He did not shrink from intolerance or even from some forms of persecution for the suppression of heresy; but he felt the natural horror of the unsophisticated Christian conscience at the thought of punishing religious opinion by the infliction of death. Alas, the conscience of ecclesiastics soon became utterly callous on that subject! They soon learnt to approve of that guilty cruelty which was destined to deluge the world with rivers of massacre, until the white robes of the Church were stained through and through with the blood of the innocent. Martin, the saintly Bishop of Tours, entirely agreed with Ambrose. "Let us have no bloodshed," he said, "in matters of religion."[2]

The embassy of Ambrose produced great results, for Bauto, the general of Valentinian, was enabled by the delay to secure the possession of the Alpine passes. It is probable indeed that Maximus was allowed to add Spain to his dominions, but he afterwards reproached Ambrose with having prevented him from the invasion of Italy.[3] To this complaint Ambrose replied that he could pay him no higher compliment, and that, had it been possible, he would have barred his passage over the Alps with his own body.

During the lull of momentary security both the Pagans and the Arians endeavoured to push their own interests, which seemed comparatively easy while the Emperor was a minor, and a woman was regent. At the head of that aesthetic, rationalising, and nominal idolatry which had superseded the old heathenism in all intelligent minds, stood Quintus Aurelius Symmachus, the

[1] Seven persons were beheaded and others banished for Priscillianism in 385, among them Euchrotia, widow of the poet Delphidius. Sulp. Sev. ii. 48; Pacatus, *Panegyrici Veteres*, xii. 29; Auson. *Carm.* v. 37 (*De Profess. Burdigal.*) See the Life of St. Martin.

[2] Sulp. Sev. *Hist. Sacr.* ii. 72, 73. Sulpicius speaks most unfavourably of the two Spanish bishops, and Maximus was tempted to sanction their criminal innovations partly because he thought it would please the orthodox, and partly from the greed of confiscation.

[3] "Me lusisti: si ego, quando venisti, non fuissem retentus, quis mihi obstitisset?"

Praefect of Rome, a man of high character and distinguished eloquence. Without being genuine Pagans, the cultivated classes of Rome were sincere in their rejection of Christianity and in their romantic hereditary attachment to the ancient customs. The chief object of contention between the two religions was the famous altar and golden statue of Victory,[1] which had been brought from Tarentum and had stood from time immemorial in the senate. Constantine had left it untouched; Constantius, to the disgust of the Pagans, had ordered it to be removed; Julian had replaced it; Valentinian I. had tolerated it; Gratian had commanded its destruction, and had given a further shock to Pagan sentiment by abrogating the privileges and confiscating the incomes of the priests and vestals.

In 382 Symmachus had headed an embassy to Gratian to induce him to repeal these edicts, but the Christian senators, who formed a distinguished minority of the senate, had sent a counter-petition to the Emperor, which was forwarded to Ambrose by Pope Damasus. By the bishop's influence Gratian had even declined to give a hearing[2] to the ambassadors of the Pagans. But Symmachus thought that there was now an opportunity for recovering lost ground, and in the year 385, with more or less privacy, he addressed to Valentinian II. a refined and eloquent appeal—the well-known *Relatio Symmachi*—that the altar should be rebuilt, and the priests and vestals reinstated in their former position. Ambrose instantly wrote a strong letter to dissuade Valentinian from granting the request. He asked for a copy of Symmachus's treatise, and when it was sent him he answered it point by point.[3] He tore away the delicate veils of rhetoric and poetry in which Symmachus had shrouded his request; he scattered the dubious appeals and shed the clear light of the Christian faith on the clouds of allegory. "For the deified visions of human imagination he substituted the reality of the Incarnate Christ, and for the sterile melancholy of regrets the hope which looks forward and commands the future."[4]

In these two pamphlets—the one feebly and fastidiously elegant, the other full of strength and fire—the leaders of the

[1] "Aurea quamvis
Marmoreo in templo rutilas Victoria pennas
Explicit."—Prudentius, *in Symmach.* ii. 48.

[2] *Ep.* xvii. [3] *Ep.* xviii. [4] De Broglie, vi. 67.

Pagan and of the Christian world are matched with each other. An effete idolatry could have found no more attractive defender than the poetic and literary Praefect, nor could Christendom have produced a more convinced and powerful pleader than the Bishop of Milan. Symmachus identifies Paganism with the past greatness of Rome, and pleads for the immemorial traditions by which Romans had profited, and which they had inherited from their fathers. The oaths of senators had been taken at the altar of Victory, and would not the oaths be regarded as less bindingly sacred if the altar was removed? As each soul had its guardian genius, so also had each nation, and Victory was the protecting genius of Rome. Then he puts into the mouth of ancient Rome herself a pathetic appeal to the Emperors to reverence the altar which she had reared in faith, and which had become dearer through the faith of generations. Turning to the case of the priests and vestals, he treats the forfeiture of their incomes as a dangerous, ungrateful, and ungenerous economy, and traces the severe famine of the previous year to the anger of the offended gods.

Ambrose replies with the rough strength of perfect conviction that the question is one between the true God on one side and demons on the other; between the source of salvation on the one hand, and on the other lies and deceit. How could a Christian Caesar doubt for a moment which side to take? God must be placed above the wishes of men, however distinguished. To yield to the petition would be to condone idolatry, and the Emperor must take his choice between Christ and devils. "When the question," he said, "is one of religion, think of God."[1] Symmachus had put his pleadings in the mouth of ancient Rome, but had her gods saved her? Did they keep Hannibal from the walls, or the Gauls from the Capitol? It was the geese who saved the Capitol, not Jupiter; or did Jupiter perchance speak by the tongue of the geese?[2] Had the gods saved Regulus from the Carthaginians? Ancient Rome was not too old to blush for her past errors, and to learn better lessons. Her Emperors had now become Christians. Had a Heathen Emperor ever reared an altar to Christ? If not, why should a Christian Emperor rear an altar to false gods? But Paganism was antique? What did that matter? We hate the

[1] "Quando de religione tractatum est, Deum cogita."
[2] "Ubi tunc erat Jupiter? an in ansere loquebatur?"

ceremonies of Neros. As for the priests and vestals, why should Heathen priests need to be supported by State revenues when Christian priests were not? There were but seven vestal virgins, and what need had they of State incomes when there were thousands of Christian virgins who never dreamed of receiving any rewards? When a Christian became a presbyter he gave all his goods to the poor; why then should a Heathen priest be paid out of the treasury? Symmachus talked of justice; had it then been just for Pagans in former days to reduce Christians to poverty, put them to death, and even refuse them burial? Lastly, the argument of Symmachus, when he attributed the famine to the anger of Pagan deities, was ridiculous. If they had been angry last year, why had they given so splendid a harvest this year? and why were there such good crops in one part of the Empire though there was famine in another? But there was something quite as powerful as argument on the side of Ambrose. He had ended with a distinct threat the letter in which he asked for a copy of the petition of Symmachus. He tells Valentinian that if he yields he will be practically excommunicated, for that the bishop cannot condone a decision adverse to religion. "You may come in that case to the Church; but there you will not find a priest, or you will find one who resists you."

The petition of Symmachus was rejected. He had urged all that could be urged in the best possible manner, though without warmth and without conviction. He had appealed with poetic emotion to old tradition, to beloved customs, to justice, to tolerance, and the interests of the State and of the Emperor. He had done all that an artistic plea and an artificial eloquence could do for a dying cause. But a tone of unreality, of half-heartedness, had run through all his pleadings, and there was a certain ring of hollowness in his most elaborate sentences. Ingenious elegance could not stay the ebbing tide. Very different was the tone of the fine, strong, careless periods of Ambrose. They are entirely devoid of the rhetorical euphuism which marked the style of Symmachus, but they are inspired with the grandeur of a triumphant cause—they are full of fire and energy and life. We see in them the half-scornful confidence of a living faith which, with scarcely the slightest effort, strikes the weak rapier of aestheticism out of the hands of its antagonist and leaves him weaponless.

It is true that, judged by later standards, the answer of

Ambrose has its own weaknesses and limitations. He shows, like all his contemporaries, a very defective forbearance, a total absence of sympathy with those who cannot accept opinions which on all points he regards as infallible. He laughs to scorn the notion of Symmachus that the greatness of Rome was due to its gods, yet he throughout betrays the same kind of false view that God is a God of particularism, not the God of all mankind; that He rewards with earthly success and prosperity those who have right opinions about Him; that the Christians only are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hands. How far short do all the Fathers fall of the teaching of Him who loves all as the Lover of souls; who maketh His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth His rain on the just and on the unjust; who hath made of one all nations of men if haply they might feel after Him and find Him; who is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he who feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him!

The opposition of Ambrose was successful. Victory deserted her own Pagan champion.[1] Though Justina was an Arian—though the court was mainly composed of Germans, and though the majority of the officials favoured the request of Symmachus, yet Valentinian, who was not yet fourteen, was so much under the influence of Ambrose that he refused permission for the restoration of the altar.

To Symmachus, Ambrose was indebted about this time for an event which greatly enhanced his glory. His name is inseparably connected with the conversion and baptism of Augustine. All the circumstances of the intercourse between the great bishop and the young African will be narrated in the Life of Augustine. It was to the favourable opinion of Symmachus that Augustine owed the nomination to a professorship at Milan, which brought him under the spell of Ambrose during the great religious crisis of his life.

[1] "Dicendi palmam Victoria tollit amico;
Transit ad Ambrosium; plus favet ira Deae."

Ennodius, in Migne, lxiii. 360 (quoted by Bishop Wordsworth).

XV

Continued

THE CONFLICT WITH THE ARIAN COURT

"ὁ τῆς ἐν θεῷ παῤῥησίας γνώμων ἀκίνητος . . . Ἀμβροσιος."
PHOTIUS, *Cod.* ccxxxi.

SECTION II

THE combat with Paganism in its decrepitude cost Ambrose no effort, but against the Arianism of the court he had a long and deadly struggle. It began in earnest when he had been for more than ten years on the episcopal throne.

Justina, the Empress-mother, was, as we have seen, a convinced and passionate Arian. She surrounded herself with Arian ecclesiastics, Arian ministers, and an Arian bodyguard of Goths. She saw with extreme disgust the gradual extinction of Arianism in Italy, through the teaching and influence of the great Bishop of Milan. During the lifetime of Gratian, who loved Ambrose like a father, she had not ventured to take any overt steps, but now that she had secured peace with Maximus, and was regent for a boy who was largely under her authority, she thought herself entitled to claim for Arianism some recognition as a distinct form of Christianity. Deep as were her obligations to Ambrose, she disliked his person and was jealous of his power. She did not consider that she was at all bound by any claims of gratitude to refrain from demanding for her religion what she regarded as a small concession. Nor did she pause to estimate the political imprudence of her conduct, certain as it was to alienate the vast majority of her son's future subjects, to render his position still more precarious, and to offend the Emperor Theodosius, on whose protection she chiefly relied.

She considered nothing but her own views, and followed the unfortunate advice of a person named Mercurinus. This man called himself an Arian bishop, though Ambrose says that he could neither make out who he was nor that he was a bishop at all.[1] A Scythian by birth, he had dropped the name of Mercurinus and adopted that of Auxentius—in honour, he said, of the late Arian Bishop of Milan, but, as others said, because he had very good reasons to blush for his former appellation.[2]

Under this man's guidance, Justina determined to make a last effort. She was well aware that she would find in Ambrose an almost insuperable obstacle to her plans, and Paulinus says that, among other designs for getting him out of the way, a certain Euthymius had hired a house near the church, and had a chariot in readiness, into which Ambrose was to be entrapped and taken out of the city. The plan broke down, and for some reason or other Euthymius himself was banished and carried away in the chariot which he had prepared for the bishop.[3]

However this may be—and in reading Paulinus we have to be constantly on our guard against the fabulous gossip of vain credulity—Justina determined at Easter 385 to demand that the Portian Basilica,[4] which was outside the walls of Milan, should be ceded to the Arians. The demand was unwise and ill-timed, for nothing could have prevented Justina from *building* a church, if she so desired and if the Arians required one. It was true that in former days Emperors, both Arian and orthodox, had taken and restored basilicas at their will and pleasure; but they had not had an Ambrose to deal with, nor a whole people to resist their demand to the death. Ambrose calmly but decidedly refused the request, and also declined to discuss it in the Emperor's consistory.[5] The rumour of the Empress's requisition had aroused a violent popular movement, which it needed all his authority to repress, for the people regarded the Church as their chief protection against the tyranny of the civil

[1] *Ep.* xxi. 8.

[2] *Serm. c. Auxent.* 22: "Exuit lupum, sed induit lupum; et quid sit agnoscitur." "Unum portentum est, duo nomina."

[3] Paulinus adds that Ambrose assisted him in his adversity.

[4] The Church of S. Victor, to the west of the city (*San Vittore al Corpo*), now stands on its site. The *gates*, from which Theodosius was afterwards repelled, are said to have been removed to the Church of *S. Ambrogio*.

[5] *Ep.* xxi. 20: "Ego in consistorio *nisi pro te* (an allusion to the embassy to Maximus) stare non possum, qui palatii secreta non quaero nec novi." There is a touch of Roman haughtiness in the tone.

power. Infuriated by opposition, and believing that it was Ambrose who had stirred up the people, on the Friday before Palm Sunday Justina sent some Counts of her consistory to make the further demand, not now for the use of the Portian Basilica, but for the new and large basilica which lay inside the walls.[1] Ambrose replied that "God's temple could not be abandoned by His priest."[2] The request—but this time only for the Portian Basilica—was renewed next day by the Praetorian Praefect Neoterus. It was made in the old basilica, and Neoterus hurried back to inform the court of the popular anger which it had excited. The next morning, while Ambrose was calmly preparing the candidates (*competentes*) for the approaching Easter baptism, news was brought him that the Emperor's servants were engaged at that moment in hanging tapestry (*vela*) in the new basilica, to show that it was imperial property.[3] He paid no attention to the news, but quietly continued his exposition of the creed to the catechumens, and then began celebrating the Holy Communion.[4] A second messenger informed him that a tumult was going on, and that the people had seized an Arian presbyter named Castulus. Horrified at the thought that blood might be shed, Ambrose with tears offered up a prayer that if any life were lost it might be his own, and sent some of his deacons to secure the liberation of Castulus. In this they succeeded. Regarding the event as a sedition, Justina threw many of the citizens into prison, ordered all public functionaries to confine themselves to their houses, and inflicted upon the guild of merchants a heavy fine of 200 pounds of gold. The people clamoured that they would pay fines if they were left undisturbed in their faith, and showed so mutinous a disposition that Justina once more sent a body of

[1] This Basilica Nova had been built by Ambrose, and dedicated to the Apostles. It was destroyed by Attila, and the Duomo is said to stand on its site. It was near the baptistery where Augustine was baptized.

[2] See *Ep.* xx., where Ambrose tells the whole incident. The lesson for the day had been the story of Naboth's vineyard, "God forbid that I should give thee the inheritance of my fathers." "Ad imperatorem palatia pertinent, ad sacerdotem ecclesiae."

[3] They are also called *cortinae*, *Ep.* xc. 19. Wordsworth thinks that they were banners bearing the imperial effigy; Gibbon, that they were "the splendid canopy and hangings of the royal seat." The "*decani*" (if the reading be right) are apparently lictors. (See *Opp.* ii. 853, note.)

[4] His account of the event is remarkable as containing one of the earliest occurrences of the word "mass." "Ego tamen mansi in munere, *missam* facere coepi."

counts and tribunes to urge Ambrose to make some concession. They insisted that the Emperor was acting perfectly within his rights, and so far they only stated the facts. Theodosius—the beloved and orthodox Theodosius—had with a stroke of his pen commanded all the Arians to give up every church in Constantinople, though they were in the majority in that city. Why might not Justina request the favour of having one single church ceded to the use of her co-religionists? If Ambrose had warmly approved the autocratic command of Theodosius, how could he so strongly denounce the mild request of Justina? To this there could be practically no answer but the ultimate one that, in the opinion of Ambrose, the Catholics were absolutely in the right and the Arians absolutely in the wrong. When an Emperor was in the right such a demand showed laudable piety; when he was in the wrong it showed profane obstinacy. Ambrose only held the views which were universal in his day, and acted in strict accordance with the degree of enlightenment which the conscience of men had then attained. That Arians should be forced to give up any number of churches to the orthodox was just; but it was monstrous profanity for the orthodox to hand over one to the Arians. "If the Emperor demanded my gold," he answered—remembering probably the famous answer of Basil to Valens—"I would not resist him, though all that I possess belongs to the poor; but the Emperor has no power over that which belongs to God. If he wants my patrimony, take it! If he thirsts for my life, I am ready to follow you. Do you wish to throw me into fetters? To lead me to death? Be it so, and gladly! I will not surround myself with the people as with a bulwark; I will not take refuge at the altar to preserve my life; far rather would I let myself be sacrificed for the altar." Then, turning to the Gothic tribunes, he exclaimed: "Is this the reason why the soil of Rome has welcomed you! is it that you may make yourselves the agents of general confusion?" "Well," they said to him, "at least hold in check these popular tumults." "It is in my power," he answered, "not to stir them up; but it is only in God's power to mitigate them when they are once aroused. But, if you think that I am the ringleader of them, it is your duty to punish me, or send me into exile."

With these answers the messengers returned, and Ambrose, who had spent the whole day in church, went back to his house

in the evening, that they might find him ready if they decided to banish him. But the court was reduced to perplexity. For two days nothing was done. On each day of Passion Week there were services and sermons, and at dawn on Wednesday Ambrose went to the old church, and was told that the new basilica was surrounded by soldiers.[1] He threatened them with excommunication if they used the least violence, and they hurried to him—greatly alarming the women of the congregation—to implore his pardon. The crowd in the new church increased, and there were loud cries that Ambrose should come; but he would not go, although the boys were insultingly tearing down the royal hangings.[2] It was his duty neither to give it up, he said, nor to defend it by force. Mounting the ambo, he preached from the passage of Job which had been the lesson for the day, and "few of the multitude could avoid the application to Justina when he spoke of the mischief done by women—Eve, Job's wife, Jezebel, and Herodias."[3] He declared that nothing should induce him to give up a church to the Arians. The palaces belonged to the Emperor, but the churches to the priest. To avoid giving any provocation, he would not go to the besieged basilica, but he sent some of his presbyters there to represent him. This deeply offended the court. A secretary was sent to him who overwhelmed him with reproaches, and called him a tyrant. "I have no weapons," he answered, "but the power of Christ. The tyranny of a priest is his weakness. When I am weak, as the Apostle says, then am I strong."[4]

He had to spend that night in the old basilica, for he could not get back to his house without incurring the danger of coming across the soldiers, and so exciting a sedition. He and his clergy occupied the long hours of darkness in praying and singing psalms.

The next day (April 10) was Green-Thursday, which was kept as a general fast. Service began as usual. The lesson of the day was from the book of Jonah, and Ambrose tells us[5] that he began his sermon with the words, "Brethren, we have just been

[1] Aug. *Ep.* xliv.

[2] *Ep.* xx. 24: "Scissae ab illudentibus pueris cortinae regiae."

[3] Allusions hardly less pointed cost Chrysostom his banishment and death.

[4] *Ep.* xx. 23: "Tyrannis sacerdotis infirmitas est."

[5] *Ep.* xx. The letter was written to Marcellina in full brotherly confidence while the events were still fresh in his mind. See too the sermon against Auxentius, *De Basilicis tradendis.*

listening to a book which tells us how sinners once were converted and turned to repentance." He had not finished when the news was brought him that the soldiers had been withdrawn from the new basilica, the fine of the merchants remitted, the money restored which had been already paid, and the imprisoned citizens set free. The court party had evidently recoiled before the firmness of the bishop, the faithfulness of the laity, and the evident signs of indignation shown by the orthodox soldiers. They had recoiled, because Justina herself had been made to feel that Ambrose and his party were too strong to be cowed into submission. But the imperial family were filled with the bitterest indignation, and Ambrose felt that the battle was not over. Among the adherents of the Arians were men who were quite ready to play the part which Henry the Second's knights played towards Thomas à Becket. The eunuch Calligonus, the groom of the chamber to Valentinian, became their spokesman. "Do you dare," he said, "while I live to despise Valentinian? I will have your head." To which Ambrose answered with a courage mixed with the lordliest scorn, "May God allow you to fulfil your threats; for then I shall suffer as beseems a bishop, and you will act as beseems a eunuch." To this person Ambrose obliquely alludes in his book *On Joseph*,[1] and we learn from Augustine that he afterwards came to a violent and disgraceful end.[2]

Meanwhile the bishop had too much knowledge of the world to feel secure. The man whom his sovereign has called a tyrant is in a precarious condition. It is said that when the young Emperor was advised to go in person to the church and overawe Ambrose by his authority he replied, "I believe that if Ambrose only gave the word the people would at once seize me and throw me into prison." "Think," writes Ambrose to his sister, "what I have to expect after such expressions! May God keep back all enemies from the church; may they turn all their weapons against me; may they sate their thirst with my blood!"[3]

No more steps were taken that year; but on Jan. 23 of the next year (386) the Catholic world was horror-stricken by the

[1] "Ne ipsius mei sermonis meminisse delectat, quem, tunc temporis, vel effuderit dolor, vel extorserit ecclesiae contumelia" (*De Joseph.* vi. 33). *Ep.* xx.

[2] Aug. *in Julian. Pelag.* 14: "Gladio novimus ultore punitum, confessione meretricis convictum." On the whole event, see, besides the letters of Ambrose, Aug. *Conf.* ix. 7; Muratori, *Annali ad ann.* 385, 386; Richter, *Weström.* 603 ff; Güldenpenning u. Ifland, *Theodosius*, 149 ff; Gibbon, ii. 547.

[3] *Ep.* xx. *ad fin.*

publication of a decree which permitted all Arians—all who held to the views of the Council of Rimini[1]—full freedom to hold religious assemblies in churches, and which threatened with death any attempts to oppose them. This law, which Ambrose called "a bloody edict," was drawn up by Auxentius.[2] The task had indeed been entrusted to the chancellor Benevolus,[3] but he absolutely declined to undertake it. He was threatened with banishment if he refused compliance, and, indignantly flinging the girdle, which was his ensign of office, at the feet of the Arian Empress, he retired to his native town of Brescia. "Take back your honours," he said, "and leave me my conscience."[4]

The law was promulgated in February, and the Emperor went with his mother to Ticinum, perhaps to see how it would be received.[5] It fell rather flat, for it was an anachronism. A generation had passed away, and the Council of Rimini was half forgotten. But on the return of Justina, Dalmatius the imperial secretary came to Ambrose with a command that he should choose judges, as "Auxentius" had done, in whose presence he and Auxentius should argue the merits of Arianism and the Nicene faith in the presence of Valentinian. Ambrose did not choose to argue in such a consistory before Goths, women, courtiers, and Arians. After consulting the bishops and presbyters who were present at Milan, Ambrose drew up a letter to the Emperor in which he gave the reasons why they refused to consent to the proposal.[6] The palace was not the proper place for such a conference. Constantius had greatly injured the Church by such private conclaves and audiences, and if any one wished to hear the arguments of Ambrose he had only to attend the church of Milan, where he constantly preached upon the subject.

Foiled in every particular, the court obstinately fell back on the demand that at least the Portian Basilica should be given up to the Arians, and on that matter Ambrose had already shown his absolute inflexibility. "If Naboth," he said, "would not resign the heritage of his fathers, how could I give up that which

[1] The colourless formula of Arianism was "that the Son was *like* the Father (ὅμοιον τῷ Πατρί) in all things, as the Scriptures say and teach."

[2] *Serm. c. Aux.* 17.

[3] *Ent.* sec. 16.

[4] Sozom. vii. 13; Rufinus, *H. E.* ii. 16.

[5] At Ticinum Justina seems to have tried to wrest a deposit out of the hands of the bishop, and to have been once more defeated by the intervention of Ambrose, *De offic.* ii. 29, sec. 150.

[6] *Ep.* xxi.

I have inherited from Dionysius, who died in exile, and the confessor Eustorgius, and other bishops, my predecessors?" The imperial party saw that they had no chance of carrying out their purpose except by getting rid of Ambrose. On his way to his church and to the graves of the martyrs he daily passed by the palace; yet they never ventured to lay hands on him. At last Justina sent a military tribune to him with the positive order that he must leave the city, adding that he might go where he liked. He declined to leave his flock, and a rumour was spread that violence was intended. He was only safe in the church, and there he stayed in the midst of his people. The basilica was guarded by soldiers, who allowed any one to go in but no one to come out. Among the weeping, praying, chanting crowd which surrounded him day and night was Monnica, the mother of Augustine. He did all that he could to rouse their drooping spirits. He assured them that nothing should induce him to give way. He comforted them by the examples of Elisha and of Peter, and denounced Mercurinus and his counsels in the sternest terms. His enemies, he said, had charged him with winning the adhesion of the multitude by gifts. If that meant that he had given largely to the poor, he accepted the taunt. The poor were his treasures; their prayers were his protection; the blind and the lame, the crippled and the old, would fight for his cause more effectually than the mightiest warriors. "Tribute belonged to the Emperor, but churches belonged to God. Caesar should have the things that are Caesar's, not the things that are God's. What prouder honour could Caesar have than to be a son of the church? He was in the church, not above it."[1] Such harangues were well fitted to rouse the courage and allay the anxieties of the terrified throng who had taken up their abode in the basilica and its precincts during those perilous days in which they found themselves in conflict with the awful divinity which still hedged in the person of an Emperor. An excited Arian was converted because he saw—so he declared—an angel standing beside the bishop and suggesting to him what he should say.

But something more was needed to occupy and to encourage the people, and Ambrose conceived the happy thought of employing them in antiphonal psalmody. The custom was entirely new in the West, but had long prevailed in the Eastern churches. Ambrose had largely introduced into Christian teaching the

[1] *Serm. c. Auxent. de Basilicis*, sec. 31.

views of Didymus, Basil, and other Greek Fathers; he now enriched the Western Church with one of the most blessed practices of the Eastern service. What was the exact character of the Ambrosian chanting, or how it differed from the Gregorian, we cannot definitely say, but certain it is that the more refined artistic and congregational manner of singing psalms and hymns was now introduced, and spread from this centre throughout the churches of Italy, Gaul, and Spain.[1] These were the spiritual songs which thrilled even to tears the heart of Augustine and lingered so sweetly in his memory.[2] Nor was Ambrose contented with the music; he also wrote hymns to which it was the accompaniment. He shares with Hilary the high distinction of being the father of Latin hymnology, and his hymns and tunes were a precious outcome of this prolonged contest. Arius had set the example of writing hymns in his *Thalia*, which were meant to familiarise the people with his heretical views. Ambrose felt that such hymns were a powerful engine of doctrine, and he wrote in praise of the Holy Trinity.

The culmination of his victory was brought about in a manner very accordant with the deepening superstition of the times. It was one of the great bishop's weaknesses that he had a fanaticism for very dubious relics of unknown martyrs. After this agitated Easter he had a presage in June 386 that he would find in a certain church the bones of two brother martyrs[3] named Protasius and Gervasius, of whom no one knew anything certain.[4] Some bones were found, and near them some bones of gigantic size ("like those," says Ambrose, "of the men of a past age"), and were transferred to the basilica amid so many miracles that the

[1] "Hoc in tempore primum *antiphonae* . . . celebrari coeperunt" (Paulin. *Vit. Ambr.* 13). Socrates (vi. 8) says that Ignatius introduced antiphonal chanting after seeing a vision of angels.

[2] *Conf.* ix. 7: "Quantum flevi hymnis et canticis suave sonantis ecclesiae commotus acriter. . . . Tunc hymni et psalmi *ut canerentur more orientalium* institutum est et ex illo in hodiernum retentum, multis jam et paene omnibus gregibus tuis et per caetera orbis imitantibus." (Comp. *De Civ. Dei*, xxii. 8.)

[3] *Ep.* xxii. "Veluti cujusdam ardor praesagii." Augustine says "a vision."

[4] Some aged persons declared that Protasius had been beheaded and Gervasius beaten to death with leaded scourges (*plumbatae*). It is difficult to know how much is historical. Loose as were the views of many of the Fathers as to the permissibility of "pious fraud," I should be far from charging St. Ambrose with imposture, as is done by Le Clerc, Mosheim, Isaac Taylor, and Henry Rogers; but I find it equally impossible to attach any real belief to these miracles. See Robertson, *Ch. Hist.* Bk. ii. ch. v.; Milman, *Hist. of Christianity*, iii. 160; and on the other side Tillemont, Fleury, and Dr. Newman.

court abandoned their struggles.[1] The sick were healed; numbers of devils were exorcised; and a blind butcher, touching the cerecloths, recovered his sight.[2] The Arians did not credit these asserted miracles, but they were believed by the multitude, and the victory of Ambrose was complete. "The storm is calmed," he said; "unity speeds on her way, faith fills the sails. The sailors emulously seek again the havens of faith which they have left."[3] The Arian party had all along taken a wrong ground. If they had aimed solely at religious edification, nothing would have been more fitting than that they should have built a church for the worship of those who held their views. Their object was different. It was to extort a recognition of their faith, as though it stood on a par with orthodox Christianity, and to do this by imperial authority and violence, in opposition to the views of the

[1] Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, xxii. 8, *Conf.* ix. 7; Paulin. *Vit. Ambr.* v. sec. 14, "*ut nomina*, ita etiam sepulcra *incognita* erant."

[2] Greg. Turon. *Lib. Mirac.* i. 4. The fondness for relics was greatly increased by the examples of Ambrose and Paulinus of Nola, until the abuse became so deplorable that in 386 Theodosius had to pass a strong edict against it. The language of De Broglie on the subject (*L'Église et l'Empire*, vi. 115) is very strong. "Tout oratoire nouvellement élevé voulait avoir sa dépouille sacrée, et on venait de loin sur le théâtre des grandes scènes de persécution acquérir un cadavre à deniers comptants. *On le baptisait un peu au hasard du nom* d'un saint," etc. There could be nothing but imposture or credulity in the notion that they possessed the relics of Samuel and of Joseph! Caecilian of Carthage had reproved a wealthy devotee named Lucilla for kissing the supposed bone of a martyr, and Martin once compelled an imaginary martyr to confess that he had been a criminal who was executed for his crimes! See too Eunapius, *Vit. Ædesii*, pp. 73-75.

[3] *Expos. in Luc.* ix. 32. What are we to think of these ecclesiastical miracles? Those who wish to see them ingeniously defended will find the case best put by Cardinal Newman, *On Eccles. Miracles.* In many instances I merely narrate them as the current belief of the day. The evidence in their favour is generally (as in this case) very vague, and in details slight, suspicious, contradictory. Unhappily too we cannot always be quite sure whether, in accordance with the unfortunate tendency to employ "oeconomy" and even religious fraud for supposed good ends (see Chrysost. *De Sacerdot.* i. 5, and other passages quoted by Gieseler, i. 235), there may not have been a little manipulation of agents and of evidences. Exaggeration and credulity there certainly were, and these could easily create miracles out of very small occurrences of the unusual. Any one who will compare the allusions of Paulinus, Ambrose, and Augustine, will find marked discrepancies. As to the supposed veniality and even meritoriousness of pious falsehoods, see the chapter in Cassian on "Quod venialiter *mendacio* sancti tamquam elleboro usi sint" (*Collat.* xvii. 17), and the sections which follow and elaborately defend that bad position. Augustine, Ambrose, and their biographers Paulinus and Possidius, abound in details of miracles, but Chrysostom, though he is not consistent on the subject, states it as notorious that miracles had long ceased; and so said Augustine in his *De Ver. rel.* 25, though he afterwards retracted his remark, *Retractt.* i. 13.

vast majority of the people. They failed ignominiously, as they deserved to fail, though they might have succeeded against any antagonist less resolute than Ambrose. He maintained the truth that Arianism is not Christianity; he resisted in this instance the impious claim of a government to dictate religious opinion; and he showed how the Christian Church may be made the bulwark of spiritual freedom.

The Easter of the following year (387) was brightened by an event which must have caused deep joy to Ambrose, though he little knew its vast future importance to the world—the baptism of Augustine. He was also engaged in continuous literary activity, and wrote among other treatises his book *De bono mortis*. In the singularly encouraging tone of this little work we catch an echo of the larger hopes of Origen and of Gregory of Nyssa. Latin theology produced nothing which breathed such genial comfort till, in the ninth century, Johannes Scotus Erigena wrote his great work *De Divisione Naturae*.

Meanwhile public affairs became more and more gloomy. Maximus was evidently preparing to invade Italy. Among other politic endeavours, he vainly attempted to hoodwink the orthodox by complaints of Justina's attempts at Milan. Once more Justina felt that she could find no such ambassador as Ambrose. Little as he was indebted to the courtiers, he at once accepted their entreaty with loyal heart, and went a second time to the usurper.[1] He dealt with him so plainly and sternly that this time the tyrant curtly ordered him to return at once.

He himself relates the stormy interview between them.[2] As before, Maximus would not give him the private audience which was due to custom and the dignity of his rank, both as a bishop and as an ambassador. But when Ambrose entered the audience-chamber Maximus embraced him. "Why do you embrace a man whom you have not acknowledged?" asked Ambrose; "had you acknowledged my claim, you would not have seen me in this place." "You are perturbed, bishop," replied the usurper.

[1] Paulinus says that a sorcerer named Innocentius confessed under torture that Justina had employed him to stir up odium against Ambrose; that the hand of a man sent to murder the bishop had withered and been restored by Ambrose, etc. etc.

[2] *Ep.* xxiv. The relations between Maximus and Martin of Tours belong to another biography. Paulinus says that Ambrose had excommunicated Maximus during his first embassy (383), but this is doubtful. *Epp.* xxiv. 12; xxv. 3. See *supra*, p. 99.

"Not," answered Ambrose, "by the wrong, but by finding myself in a place unsuitable to me." "I saw you in public at your first embassy also; why did you not then complain?" "Because then I came to beg on the part of a suppliant, but now to treat in the name of an equal." "If Valentinian is my equal," said Maximus in his fury, "to whom does he owe that?" "To God," answered Ambrose, "who has preserved for him the power He gave him." "It was you who prevented me from invading Italy." "If so, I glory in it. God bids me to defend the widow and the orphan. Gladly with my own body would I have barred your crossing over the Alps." He then demanded the restoration of the corpse of Gratian, that it might receive funeral honours. "He restored to you your living brother; give him back his dead brother." "It would create too much feeling," said Maximus. "What!" answered Ambrose, "would those who abandoned a master while he was living rise in his defence now that he is dead?" He was ordered to quit the city, and with him the aged and almost dying Hyginus, for whom Ambrose interceded in vain.[1] The Bishop of Milan left Trèves openly by broad daylight by the ordinary road, though he had received many warnings that he might be assassinated on the way.

But Ambrose had seen through his designs, and wrote to Justina and Valentinian that the usurper's professions of peace were only the cloak for war. They meanwhile—having been beguiled into the belief that Ambrose had been too peremptory and haughty—had sent a second ambassador, the Syrian Domninus, who was completely deceived by the specious words of Maximus, and became the dupe and agent of his designs to such an extent that he himself was put in nominal command of some of the legions which Maximus was sending to Italy. No sooner had he secured the passes of the Alps by this transparent device than Maximus swiftly moved his army towards the Alps, laughing secretly at the foolish simplicity of the ambassador who had smoothed his path. Justina, with her son Valentinian and her beautiful daughter Galla, fled to the protection of Theodosius at Thessalonica. He warned them of the evil consequences caused by their Arianism, but espoused their cause, and, having lost his wife Placidia, he married Galla. Justina died shortly afterwards,

[1] Hyginus, Bishop of Cordova, had been opposed to Priscillian, but had become his friend, for Ithacius, who was Bishop of Ossonoba, wished to excommunicate him. Sulp. Sev. ii. 47, Schepps, *Priscillian*, p. 18.

but Ambrose credited Theodosius with the glory of not only restoring the kingdom to Valentinian, but also winning him back to the orthodox faith.[1]

Maximus had advanced to Milan, but, though he had often breathed the most violent threats against Ambrose, he left him undisturbed. Theodosius crossed over to Italy with Valentinian, defeated Maximus at Siszek and Pettau, and drove him to Aquileia. There he was seized by his own soldiers; the purple robe was torn off his back, the purple sandals from his feet, the purple and jewelled diadem from his head, and he was dragged, bound hand and foot, into the presence of Theodosius. It was on Aug. 25, 388, almost exactly five years since Gratian had suffered the same fate. Theodosius looked at him with a mixture of pity and disgust, and, after a few disdainful questions, dismissed him without deciding his fate. His captors therefore took the law into their own hands and struck off his head outside the imperial tent. Ambrose used his best influence for the common herd of the vanquished, and thanked Theodosius for having liberated large numbers from exile, prison, and the sentence of death, at his request.[2]

[1] *Ep.* liii. "Gratias . . . reddidi quod eum non solum regno reddidisses, sed, quod est amplius, restituisses fidei."

[2] *Ep.* xl. 25. Andragathius, the actual murderer of Gratian, commanded the fleet of Maximus, and on hearing of his defeat drowned himself in the Adriatic.

XV

Continued

AMBROSE AND THEODOSIUS

"Nihil in sacerdotibus plebeium requiri, nihil populare."
Ep. xxviii. *ad Iren.*

SECTION III

THEODOSIUS took up his abode at Milan, and Ambrose had now to show how he would bear himself before an Emperor so orthodox, so passionate, and so strong. He had been frank with Valentinian I.; he had dauntlessly confronted the blood-stained Maximus; he had braved the passionate fury of Justina and Valentinian II.; but would he be able to hold his own against a conqueror so eminent and so powerful as Theodosius, a man whose will was as strong and whose faith was as orthodox as his own?

Maximus, anxious to secure support from every quarter, had granted the petition so often urged through Symmachus by the Pagan senators at Rome, that the altar of Victory in the senate house should be restored.[1] The matter was referred to Theodosius, who promised to take it into consideration. But Ambrose at once exerted his influence so strongly on the other side that Theodosius refused the request, and also passed stringent edicts against the toleration of Pagan worship.[2]

It was not long before Ambrose had to address himself to the Emperor, and this time he came into more serious conflict with

[1] The Pagans said that Maximus had now become Pontifex because Gratian had insulted the gods by refusing the insignia of Pontifex Maximus. In that age such plays on words were esteemed important. Zosimus, iv. 36. See *supra*, p. 95. Theodosius, however, called himself *Summus* Pontifex. See Hodgkin, i. 150.

[2] *De obit. Theod.* 38.

his proceedings. "Who," he asks, "will dare to tell you the truth if a priest does not dare?"[1] In 389 a tumult had occurred at a little town called Callinicum, in Mesopotamia, and the Christians, irritated by the Jews, had—apparently with the cognisance of the bishop, and the aid of certain monks—burnt down the Jewish synagogue and a church of the Valentinian Gnostics.[2] Theodosius was a man of violent temper, and in his sudden transports of fury he was often tempted to take measures of which he repented in cooler blood. He was always peculiarly irritated by violations of the public peace, and, without even hearing the case, he ordered the governor of the district to punish the monks, and to make the bishop of Callinicum rebuild the synagogue at his own expense. Ambrose at the time was at Aquileia, but the moment that he heard of this he wrote an indignant letter to the Emperor.[3] It was a matter in which God's cause was concerned, and he could not be silent. A bishop ordered to build a synagogue, and so left with no alternative but to be either a traitor to God or a martyr—it was monstrous! To destroy a synagogue; was that guilt? If so, Ambrose approved of the guilt. What a shame to the Church, what a triumph to the enemies of Christ, to see a synagogue built by a bishop! Julian had been prevented from rebuilding the Temple of Jerusalem by fire from heaven; is not Theodosius afraid of a similar judgment? How many churches had been burnt down by the Jews in Julian's days; they had been met by no avenger, and now was an Emperor to interfere for the rebuilding of a miserable synagogue? On a synagogue so built the Jews might well put the inscription: "*Templum impietatis factum de manubiis Christianorum.*" Maximus had caused a Jewish synagogue to be rebuilt at Rome, and the Christians had called him "a king of the Jews." Theodosius had forgiven the far more outrageous crimes against order at Antioch; ought he to be so hard on these Christians? Was this the Emperor's gratitude for all the mercies which Christ had bestowed upon him?[4] Ambrose was perhaps all the more indignant because very recently the Arians had burnt down the house of the Patriarch at Constantinople, and had been forgiven at the

[1] *Ep.* xl. 4.

[2] Paulinus (ch. 22) says "*lucus* Valentinianorum," and he adds, with extreme unfairness, that "the Valentinians worship thirty gods." Ambrose says more fairly, "triginta et duos *eonas* . . . quos appellant Deos."

[3] *Ep.* xl.

[4] *Ep.* xli.

request of Arcadius, who begged that the beginning of his reign might not be stained by cruel measures.

Even this letter did not make Theodosius yield. Then Ambrose, who had returned to Milan, openly appealed to him, in a sermon at which he was present, to do justice and show mercy.[1] "You have been preaching against me, bishop," said the Emperor, as the bishop descended the steps of the ambo.[2] "Not against you," he answered, "but for you." Theodosius promised to mitigate his decree, which he admitted to be too severe, but one of his courtiers, Timasius, exclaimed that the turbulent monks ought at least to be punished. "Silence!" exclaimed Ambrose, with great haughtiness; "I am not talking to you, but to the Emperor, of whom I know that he fears God. When I wish to speak with you, I will do so in another manner." Then turning to Theodosius, he conjured him so to act as to allow him, with a good conscience, to "offer the sacrifice." The Emperor nodded assent, but Ambrose was not satisfied till he had received an absolute promise. "I will alter the edict," said the Emperor. "That is not enough," replied the bishop. "Give me your word that it shall be repealed." "I give you my word," said the Emperor. "I rely on it," answered Ambrose. "Do so," repeated Theodosius; and Ambrose then consecrated the Eucharistic elements. "But," he writes to his sister, "I should not have done so if he had not given me his full promise."[3]

It is impossible not to admire the noble courage and firmness of the man; and yet there were dangerous elements in his line of conduct. Theodosius had been too hasty, and he himself saw that there was something severe and unseemly in ordering a Christian bishop to build a Jewish synagogue, especially before he had been heard in his own cause.[4] On the other hand, Ambrose was dangerously and extremely in the wrong when he confused illegal turbulence with holy zeal. The principle which he asserted, that the judgment of the civil ruler must be subordinated to religious zeal (*cedat oportet censura devotioni*, *Ep.* xl. ii.), is wholly

[1] *Ep.* xlii. sec. 26: "Ut jam non solum de te sed ad te verba convertam."

[2] Paulin. vii. sec. 23: "Contra nos proposuisti hodie Episcope" (*Ep.* xlii. sec. 27). It might be thought from this narrative that Ambrose was intolerant of the *opinions* of others. This was not the case, as we see from *De Fide*, ii. 11, sec. 89. He looked on these questions more from the side of imperial unity.

[3] *Ep.* xlii. 28: "Aio illi Ago fide tua, et repetivi; Ago fide tua. Age, inquit, fide mea."

[4] "Revera de synagoga reparanda ab episcopo durius statueram."

indefensible, and would open the door to the worst excesses of intemperate fanaticism. When, at the Council of Aquileia, he laid it down as a law that "priests ought to judge laymen, not laymen priests," he was enunciating a rule quite contrary to the repeated teaching of Scripture, and fatally adapted to turn the world upside down. Even so loyal a Romanist as the Duke de Broglie condemns the principle on which Ambrose relied. "The Church," he says, "in her maternal prudence is far from having ratified in these delicate points all the anathemas of Ambrose." Having never imposed on the faithful the obligation of destroying with their own hands the temples of error, she does not forbid them to keep the engagements contracted, or to repair the wrongs committed in the eye of the law. The bishop and the monks were transgressing laws both human and Divine when they burned down the property of men who held a different faith, and Ambrose, in defending their conduct, was on the high road to the hideous persecutions which afterwards disgraced the annals of Christianity, with such crimes as the Albigensian crusades. By easy and fatal steps men began to confound the Church with themselves, themselves with the episcopate, the episcopate with the Papacy, and to make religious convictions, which often were grossly erroneous, a pretext for the interference with life and liberty, and the abnegation of all civil rights. They forgot the great eternal principle that "thoughts are toll-free"; that man is responsible for his religious beliefs only to his conscience and to his God. Men who have recognised the absolute and unique supremacy of that allegiance have often been in the right when they stood up single-handed, not only against the world, but also against the all but unanimous voices of corrupted and erring Churches, which tried to defend gross errors and flagrant crimes by the vaunt of catholicity.

But if in this matter Ambrose was partly in the wrong, there occurred in 390 an event which shows him at the very summit of his moral grandeur, and in which he was splendidly and heroically in the right.[1] No ecclesiastical errors, no fanatical exaggeration, detracted from the glory of his championship of the cause of outraged humanity against the ungovernable passion of his Emperor. He became the personified conscience of all who were noblest in the Roman Empire and the Christian world.

[1] It was about this time that Ambrose wrote his *Hexaemeron*, and also condemned Jovinian.

Botherich, the brave and upright Governor of Illyria, had thrown into prison a charioteer of Thessalonica, who had been accused by his cup-bearer of one of those enormities which were the plague-spot of Pagan antiquity. The people of Thessalonica, passionately devoted to the games of the circus, demanded the liberation of their favourite, and when this was refused, they rose in tumult, murdered Botherich, and many of the chief officials of the city, and dragged their corpses with insults through the streets. The crime was of the most heinous character. It was one which was certain to awaken the utmost wrath of the Emperor. He had been baptized at Thessalonica, and had long made his residence in that city. The people ought to have been bound to him by gratitude for many benefactions, and yet they had foully murdered his officers and his personal friend. Those who knew the storms of fury to which he was liable might well tremble for the very existence of the city.

It happened at the time that some Ligurian bishops were assembled at Milan, under the presidency of Ambrose, to discuss the consecration of Felix as Bishop of Trèves by some Ithacian bishops. No sooner was the news of the riot at Thessalonica brought to this council than Ambrose and the other bishops wrote to implore the clemency of the Emperor. They begged that in the punishment to be inflicted he would not confound the innocent with the guilty. He promised them that he would behave with moderation; but meanwhile all his hottest feelings were inflamed by his courtiers, and especially by his minister Rufinus, who represented the rebellion as an act of the most pernicious and perilous insolence on the part of an entire population, to which exemplary vengeance was due. In a moment of mad infatuation, which clouded all his best instincts, Theodosius, who had, perhaps purposely, left Milan, sent avengers of blood to Thessalonica. Like the Athenians when they had despatched their atrocious mandate to Paches to massacre the whole people of Mitylene, he repented, and sent to recall his fatal edict. But, unlike the messengers of mercy sent by the Athenians, the envoys of the Emperor's repentance were too late. There was to be another great race in the circus at Thessalonica. The people were assembled in thousands to witness it. Then the gates of the circus were closed, and the soldiers of Theodosius entered with drawn swords. The scene which ensued was one of the most horrible recorded in history. The crowd in the circus were

massacred, alike the guilty and the innocent, alike citizens and strangers. For three hours of indescribable horror the work of hell went on. On the lowest computation, seven thousand fell.[1]

The narratives of the massacre abounded in touching incidents. One of these was long remembered. An unhappy father had taken to the circus his two young sons. When the assassins came up to him, he succeeded in moving them to spare one at least of the two boys. But when he was ordered to make his choice between them his heart failed him. He could not select one of his own boys to be murdered. They were equally dear to him. He offered them both, with himself, to the swords of the brutal executioners.[2]

A cry of horror arose throughout the Empire when the news of this blood-bath was brought to them. None felt it more keenly than the bishops assembled in Milan.[3] Were they living in the days of Theodosius or in those of Nero and Caligula? Had such an atrocity stained even the days of the Apostate Julian? Ambrose was overwhelmed with shame and anguish. The bishops had assembled to denounce the murder of a few Priscillianists for heresy under Maximus, and here was an indiscriminate massacre of 7000, innocent as well as guilty, by Theodosius. The Emperor was absent from Milan, but his return was expected in a few days. Every one looked to Ambrose to avenge the crime. The bishop behaved with consummate tact as well as with perfect firmness. He would not await the arrival of the Emperor. He gave out that he was ill, and, indeed (he writes), he was ill with a sickness which it required a gentler hand than that of Theodosius to cure. He retired—perhaps to the house of his sister Marcellina in Rome—in order to leave time for the Emperor's conscience to work, and for his repentance to awaken. He would arouse no public scandal which might defeat his purpose altogether, but he penned a letter worthy at once of a wise statesman and of a Hebrew prophet.[4] He writes, he says, with his own hand what is meant for the Emperor's eye alone. The bishops of the council would have justly blamed him if he did not warn the Emperor to make his peace with God. He is

[1] Theodoret, v. 17. Theophanes says 15,000.

[2] On the massacre of Thessalonica, see Ambr. *Ep.* li.; Theodor. v. 17; Sozom. vii. 25; Rufin. ii. 18.

[3] "Nemo non ingemuit, nullus mediocriter accepit" (*Ep.* li. 6).

[4] *Ep.* li. There are also allusions to these events in the *Enarrationes in xii. psalmos*

obliged to avoid the Emperor's presence, thankfully and joyously as he would under other circumstances have welcomed it. "I persuade, I entreat, I exhort, I admonish, because it is a grief to me that the perishing of so many of the innocent is no grief to you; I dare not offer the sacrifice if you are to be present"; nay, he had even been forbidden to do so by a Divine intimation on the night when he left Milan. "I cannot deny," he says, "that you have a zeal for the faith, that you fear God; but you have a naturally passionate spirit, which when mitigated is easily moved to compassion, but which becomes ungovernable when it is once excited. I would gladly have left you to the workings of your own heart, but I dare not either keep silence or make light of your offence. So bloody a scene as that at Thessalonica is unheard of in the world's history. I had warned and entreated you against it; you yourself recognised its atrocity; you endeavoured to recall your decree. And now I call on you to repent. Remember how David repented for his crime. Will you be ashamed to do what David did? You can only atone for your sin by tears, by penitence, by humbling your soul before God. You are a man, and as you have sinned as a man you must so repent. No angel, no archangel, can forgive you. God only can forgive you, and He forgives those who repent. Ah, how must I grieve that you, who were an example of special piety, you who were unwilling that even one innocent person should suffer, should not repent that so many of the innocent have been slaughtered! Brave in battle, praiseworthy in all things else, yet goodness was the crown of all your conduct. The evil spirit envied you these noblest of your blessings. Overcome him while yet you may! . . . I love you; I esteem you from my heart; I pray for you. If you believe it, accept what I say. If you believe it not, pardon me for preferring God to you."[1]

What answer Theodosius returned to this noble letter we do not know; but when Ambrose had come back to Milan the Emperor as usual presented himself at the hour of service. Ambrose met him in the porch.[2] "It seems," he said, "O Augustus, that

[1] *Ep.* li. 4: "*Habes naturae impetum quem si quis suscitat revocare vix possis.*" Theodosius was aware of his own vehement temper. See Claud. *in iv. Cons. Honor.* 266.

[2] The cypress-wood gates of the basilica of San Ambrogio Maggiore in Milan are traditionally believed to be the very gates at which this scene took place. An old mosaic in this church represents the legend of Ambrose seeing in a trance the obsequies of St. Martin of Tours.

you have not repented of the heinousness of your murder. Your imperial power has darkened your understanding, and stood between you and the recognition of your sin. Consider the dust from which you spring. Do not let the glory of the purple blind your eyes to the weakness of the mortal body which it covers. You have sinned against your fellow-men, and One is Lord and King of us all. With what eyes will you look on His temple? With what feet will you tread His courts? How can you uplift in prayer the hands which yet drip with innocent blood? or receive into such hands the Body of the Lord? Depart! add not sin to sin. Find in repentance the means of mercy which can restore you to health of soul." "David sinned," said the Emperor, "yet David was forgiven." "You have imitated him in his sin," answered Ambrose, "imitate him also in his repentance."

The Emperor humbled himself. He had sinned before the world; his repentance should be as public as his sin. For eight months, as a penitent, he abstained from presenting himself at divine service.[1] But when the Christmas festival returned he went once more to the church, for while banished thence he felt as though he were banished from the kingdom of heaven. But Ambrose was still inflexible. The time of penance had not yet elapsed. Theodosius felt the exclusion bitterly. His minister Rufinus surprised him one day bathed in tears, and could hardly conceal the disdainful smile which rose to his features. "You smile," said Theodosius, "because you do not feel my misery. The Church of God is open to slaves and beggars; to me it is closed, and with it the gates of heaven." Theodosius complained of the severity of Ambrose, and Rufinus tried to soften the bishop's heart. He was unsuccessful. Ambrose repelled with angry disdain the evil genius of his master, the counsellor of his crime.[2] "I will refuse the Emperor leave to enter the body of the church" he said. "If he likes to act as a tyrant I am prepared to die." The Emperor came to one of the side buildings of the basilica, and Ambrose again met him. "What!" said Ambrose, "have you come to defy the laws of God?" "I have not come to defy them," answered Theodosius, "only I beg you

[1] Theodoret, *H. E.* v. 18. De Broglie, with great ingenuity, points to some of the anti-ecclesiastical laws of these eight months as a proof that a struggle was going on in the mind of Theodosius between his pride and his penitence. *L'Église et l'Empire*, vi. 313-315.

[2] On Rufinus, see Thierry's *Nouveaux Récits*. Claudian has handed him down to execration.

not to close to me the door which God opens to all who repent." "And what penitence hast thou shown?" asked Ambrose. "Tell me what I ought to do," answered the Emperor, "and I will do it." Ambrose bade him take his place in church openly among the penitents, and also to renew an admirable law once passed by Gratian, but since suffered to pass into desuetude, that an interval of thirty days must always elapse between judgment and punishment. The Emperor accepted these conditions. He laid aside his ensigns of royalty. Prostrate on the ground, he bewept in the church the sin into which he had been misled by the treachery of others. "My soul cleaveth to the dust," he cried. "O God, quicken Thou me according to Thy word!" With groaning and tears he implored pardon. What private persons blush to do, the Emperor did not blush to do, namely, to perform penance in public; nor was there any day afterwards on which he did not grieve for his error.[1]

It may be true that the circumstances of this memorable scene are to a certain extent dramatised. The accounts of the various historians differ in minor details. But the central fact is undoubtedly true, and is vouched for by the letters and sermons of the principal actor. He braved, without quailing, the possible fury of a man who was liable to transports of passion so violent that at times his children fled from him in terror. During these paroxysms his own Empress, Flaccilla, dared not face him, and his sister-in-law Serena, the wife of Stilicho, alone ventured to confront his wrathful mood.[2] There have been other instances in which brute force has been overawed by moral ascendency; in which the loftiest of earthly powers, in all its plenitude of majesty, has bowed before the spiritual strength of the humblest prophet. Seven centuries later Henry IV. of Germany stood shivering in the snow before the closed gates of the remorseless Gregory VII. at Canossa. We may have seen the spot

> "Where Barbarossa took his mantle off
> And, kneeling, on his neck received the foot
> Of the proud pontiff."

[1] *De obit. Theodos.* 34. In reading such passages I cannot agree with Plitt (Herzog, *Real Encykl.* i. 332) that the story of the repulse of Theodosius from the basilica and from the choir are "*offenbar fabulös.*"

[2] Claudian, *Laus Serenae*, 134—

> "Et quoties rerum moles ut publica cogit
> Tristior, *aut ira tumidus flagrante* redibat
> *Cum patrem* nati *fugerent atque ipsa timeret*
> *Commotum Flaccilla virum.*"

Our own Henry II. suffered himself to be scourged by the monks of Canterbury before the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket. But none of these and similar events have the impressive grandeur and solemnity of the repulse of Theodosius by Ambrose from the gates of Milan. It was less than a hundred years since Christianity had been acknowledged by the imperial power. The Emperors were still invested with an almost superhuman dignity in the eyes of the world. They were irresponsible autocrats wielding the undisputed right of life and death. Theodosius himself was not a puppet in the hands of others, but every inch a ruler and a conqueror, the foremost man by far at that moment in all the world. And yet where there is an Ambrose there will always be a Theodosius. The bishop stood before the Emperor like the embodiment of his own moral sense. The hands which were red with innocent blood were impotent to strike, and in the person of Ambrose the might of weakness became irresistible because it was armed with the thunders of Sinai. Theodosius was no weak criminal like Henry IV. of Germany, nor was Ambrose an implacable Pope like Gregory. The two men were friends who honoured and loved each other, and in Ambrose the mighty Emperor recognised the ideal of all that was best and noblest in himself. He never forgot the massacre of Thessalonica or thought of it without remorse.[1]

In one more slight but characteristic incident the relation between the two men was illustrated.[2] Theodosius, now forgiven and reinstated in Church privileges, had been admitted to the Holy Communion, and had mounted the chancel steps to present his offering. Having done this he remained in the *sacrarium* among the presbyters. It might have been thought that, considering the extraordinary power claimed and exercised by the Emperors in religious matters—considering too the Old Testament analogies on which half the supernatural claims and privileges of

[1] On the other hand, the name of the holy Ambrose has often been used as a battle-cry against the civil power. For some weighty remarks on the dangerous side of the conduct of Ambrose, see Dean Merivale's *Lectures on Early Church History*, pp. 38-43. He quotes Bungener, *Séances Historiques*, p. 190 (1858): "Quand Innocent III. pousse à l'extermination des Albigeois—Théodose, Théodose! Quand les évêques d'Angleterre poussent Henri VIII. à l'extermination des Luthéreins du pays—Théodose, Théodose! Quand Léon X. pousse François I. à l'extermination des Luthériens en France—Théodose! Quand, Bossuet, enfin, célèbre Louis XIV.—Théodose, Théodose!"

[2] Theodoret, *H. E.* v. 18; Sozomen, *H. E.* vii. 25.

the priesthood had been based—the position which he took might have been regarded as justifiable. But Ambrose was never guided by motives of worldly policy where he considered that a principle was involved. He at once sent a presbyter to the Emperor to point out to him that his assigned place of honour was below the steps, and that the chancel was reserved for the use of the clergy. "The purple," said the messenger, "makes Emperors, not priests." Theodosius at once obeyed, and rose to purer grandeur by the readiness with which he took the lower room. So little did he resent this public admonition that he honoured Ambrose all the more because of it. He recognised *a man* when he saw one. Not long after, in the basilica of Constantinople, he was invited by the worldly and half-secular prelate Nectarius—who, like Ambrose, had been forcibly called to the episcopate from a high civil office—to take his seat within the sacred enclosure of the holy table. The Emperor declined. "I know no bishop except Ambrose" was his subsequent remark. The relations between them were never afterwards disturbed.

Let us not overlook the immense significance of these scenes. They mark the final triumph of the Christian religion over the Roman world. Heretofore the Church had appealed as a suppliant; now she commanded like a ruler. Before she had asked for pity, now she demanded reparation. Athanasius, Basil, Ambrose himself, had on former occasions resisted imperial omnipotence on behalf of the rights of the Church; by their lips she had opposed the violation of her faith, the seizure of her possessions, the wrongs of her ministers. But in this case she spoke in the common defence of mankind against the excesses of a legitimate authority. Theodosius had used the sword with the cruelty of an executioner, but he had neither violated the sanctuary nor laid hands on the censer. He had rested in his own proper domain, even while he bathed it in human blood. Into that domain—the independent domain of secular justice and political sovereignty—now for the first time a simple priest had entered, with dauntless voice and forehead, his hand uplifted to pardon or to curse in the name of that moral law which rules all, and from which no human being can claim to escape, even under the shelter of a throne. It was the first appearance in the world of a right, delicate and supreme, which lies hidden on the obscure confines, where political and spiritual powers conflict with one another.

In the infancy of modern Europe this right was a bridle of barbarism, sometimes serving as an excuse for ambitious tentatives, but henceforth powerful in the councils of potentates.[1] How far have we already advanced from the days when Constantius had exclaimed in a burst of anger, "My will is just as much a canon as any other, and the Eastern bishops are glad that it is so"!

This same year (390) was marked by a singular proof of the bishop's widespread fame, for he received a visit from two of the wisest and most eminent of the Persians. They came to Milan solely to see and consult him, and went away full of admiration. In the year 391 Ambrose published his book *On the Duties of Ministers.* A single passage will show how strenuous was the episcopal autocracy which he exercised. He tells his clergy that they will remember a friend of theirs, who seemed to recommend himself by active services, whom yet Ambrose refused to ordain because he did not approve of his personal bearing; and of another whom he found among the clergy and forbade even to walk in front of him, because he could not tolerate the arrogance of his strut. He was right, he says, in both instances. One of the two apostatised to the Arians during the persecution of Justina; the other was guilty of dubious pecuniary transactions, and refused to submit himself to sacerdotal jurisdiction.[2]

Other ecclesiastical events marked the year. Ambrose had founded a convent at Milan, and two of the monks, Sarmatio and Barbatian, deserted the monastery, forsook the monastic ideal, and became conspicuous (it is said) for their bad example.[3]

Ambrose took part this year in the Council of Capua. It was summoned to see what could be done towards ending the Antiochene schism; but the Western Fathers felt themselves so hopelessly unable to follow the windings of that long controversy that they could do nothing better than leave the decision in the hands of the bad and wily Theophilus of Alexandria. The council also condemned Bonosus for not accepting the *Aeiparthenia* of the Virgin.

[1] See De Broglie, vi. 320.

[2] *De off.* i. 18, sec. 72. These anecdotes show that Ambrose was a wonderfully good judge of character (*nec fefellit sententia*). "Lucebat in illorum incessu imago levitatis."

[3] *Ep.* lxiii. 7; *Enarr. in Psalm. xxxvi.* sec. 49. We must remember that we have only the story of a bitter opponent.

XV

Continued

LAST DAYS OF AMBROSE

"Fateberis non illum martyrio, sed martyrium illi defuisse."
Edd. Benedict.

SECTION IV

But the chief events of the year 392 were political. Theodosius, with the integrity which marked his character, after defeating Maximus had left his young brother-in-law Valentinian in undisturbed possession of his Western dominions, and had assigned to the barbarian Count Arbogast the duty of being his military protector. The weak character of the young Emperor unfitted him for rule, but he soon found it intolerable to submit to the undisguised dominance of the haughty Frank. He tried in vain to shake off the yoke of this Mayor of the Palace. One day with angry trepidation he cancelled his appointment. "I did not receive my office from *you*," said Arbogast, "and it is not in your power to dismiss me from it." With these words he tore up his written dismissal and insolently trampled it under his feet. Valentinian was at Vienne in Gaul, and in great alarm from the threats of barbarian irruption. Since the death of his mother Justina he had been fully reconciled to the orthodox faith, and had learnt to look up to Ambrose as to a father.[1] He now earnestly desired to receive baptism at his hands, preferring him to all the bishops by whom he was surrounded. He felt himself to be no better than a puppet in the hands of Arbogast, and a prisoner in his own palace. It was perhaps with a presentiment of approaching death that he wrote

[1] *Ep.* liii.

to implore Ambrose to cross the Alps and come to him, exclaiming frequently to his friends, "Shall I be so happy as to see my father again."[1] He sent his letter by one of that portion of his guards who were called *silentiarii*, and this emissary was bidden to place his letter in no hands but those of Ambrose himself. Ambrose started as soon as he received the letter, and was crossing the Alps when he received the grim intelligence that on May 15 the unfortunate youth—he was but twenty years old—had been found strangled on a lonely walk beside the banks of the Rhone at Vienne. He had been engaged in athletic sports with his soldiers when he was slain "with some little semblance of a possible accident." Terrible indeed was the oft-repeated tragedy of these days! "To-day the purple robe, the radiated crown, the epithets '*Augustus*,' '*Pius*,' '*Felix*,' '*Invictus*,' '*Pater Patriae*,' and all the cant of conventional courtliness; to-morrow the headless trunk, the dagger-stabs in the purple, the murdered children, and a legion in the adjoining province greedily fingering their new donative, and shouting the names of another pious, happy, and unconquered Emperor who had been mad enough to climb the slippery slope."[2]

Ambrose returned to Milan in great distress of mind, and thither the remains of the young Emperor were conveyed. By the order of Theodosius they were enclosed in a sarcophagus of most precious porphyry, and honoured with splendid obsequies.[3] The funeral oration which Ambrose delivered is deeply touching; we almost seem to hear his sobs as he speaks of the love, the virtue, and the trust of the two young and murdered Emperors. "O my Gratian, my Valentinian, beautiful and most dear, how brief was your term of life! . . . how closely your deaths followed on each other! how near are your sepulchres! O Gratian, I say, O Valentinian, I love to linger on your names, and to rest on the celebration of your goodness! Inseparable in life, not separated in death! O Gratian, my son, to me most sweet, I grieve for thee. Very many signs of thy affection hast thou given me! Thou in thy last moments didst long for my presence! And I grieve also for thee, my son Valentinian, to

[1] Ambr. *De obit. Valent.* "Tu me inter pericula requirebas; tu in tuis extremis me appellabas."

[2] Some seem to have believed that he died by suicide. Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, v. 26.

[3] "Est hic porphyreticum labrum pulcherrimum," writes Ambrose to Theodosius (*Ep.* liii. 4), "sunt tabulae porphyreticae pretiosissimae quibus vestiatur operculum."

me truly beautiful. Thou thoughtest that I could rescue thee from thy peril. Thou not only lovedst me as a father, but didst hope in me as a deliverer. . . . Woe is me, what pledges have I lost! How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"

Singular that a simple bishop should be thus openly regarded as the sole effective protector of Emperor after Emperor!

In this oration Ambrose specially consoles Justa and Grata, the young Emperor's sisters, in the trouble caused by his having died unbaptized. "It was enough," said the bishop, "that he had desired baptism, and that baptism of sincere desire was no less efficacious than baptism itself."[1] Christ had baptized him since human services were lacking. The doctrine was perhaps more liberal than would have been allowed by the majority of the bishop's contemporaries, but it will strongly remind the reader of the "*crede et manducasti*" of St. Augustine. The murder of Valentinian was no doubt hastened because Arbogast wished to prevent his declared intention of returning to Milan, where he would have been safe under the protection of Ambrose. Being a Frank, the general did not dare to assume the diadem after the murder of his young master. He chose "as a suitable block on which to hang the imperial purple" a puppet named Eugenius, a grammarian and rhetorician.[2] Eugenius at once wrote a letter to Ambrose, who did not condescend to reply to this "lacquey of the barbarian." But when Eugenius, as the bishop foresaw would be the case, took up the cause of the Pagans, replaced the altar of Victory in the Roman Senate-house, and restored the priests and vestals to their incomes and privileges, he wrote him a bitter and indignant letter.[3] Hearing that Eugenius and Arbogast were on their way to Milan, and not choosing to have any dealings with them whatever, he retired first to Bologna and then to Florence, nor did he return till August, when they had departed.[4] They had been refused communion by the Church of Milan, and such was their fury that Arbogast threatened on his return to stable his horses in

[1] *De obit. Valent. Consolatio*, 30: "Non amisit gratiam quam poposcit"; 51, "Dicite mihi quid aliud in nobis est nisi voluntas, nisi petitio?" See Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* v. ix. 4.

[2] He had been *magister scriniarum*, or *tribunus notariorum*; but was not even an *illustris*.

[3] *Ep.* lvii. *Ad Eugenium Imperatorem*. Eugenius was *de facto* Emperor, and Ambrose could not refuse him the title.

[4] *Epp.* lxi. lxii.

the basilica and make soldiers of the clergy.[1] It is doubtful whether, under the worst circumstances, they would have ventured to carry out their threats. Paulinus tells us, on the authority of a young cup-bearer of Arbogast, that when the Frank had defeated his own nation in battle, one of their chieftains asked him at a banquet "if he knew Ambrose." "Yes," answered the general, "I know him well, and frequently sit at his table." "That is why you are victorious, Count," replied the chief; "because you are beloved by the man who says to the sun 'Stand!' and it stands."

Meanwhile in 394 Theodosius had arrived in Italy as the avowed champion of Christianity against Eugenius and the Arian and Pagan party.[2] Stilicho was one of the commanders of the Roman troops; Gainas of the barbarian auxiliaries. Among these served a chieftain, as yet of little note, whose name was Alaric, who then first learnt the way to the West.

On Sept. 6, 394, Theodosius fought a bloody but undecided battle at the Frigidus, near Aquileia.[3] The superiority seemed to be so clearly on the side of Arbogast that even the brave Stilicho counselled a retreat. Theodosius refused. The banner of the Cross, he said, should not give way before the banners of Hercules and Jupiter. He spent the night in prayer, and towards morning dreamed that the Apostles James and Philip, mounted on white horses, had appeared, and promised him the victory. One of his soldiers had dreamed the same dream. As at Hastings, so at Aquileia, one camp resounded with prayer and the other with festivities. In the morning the battle was renewed, and aided by such generals as the Vandal Stilicho and the Goths Gainas and Alaric—aided too by an Alpine storm, the well-known and dangerous *Bora* of those regions, which whirled snow in the faces of the enemy—Theodosius won a signal victory.[4] "Where is the Lord God of Theodosius?" shouted

[1] *Enarr. in Ps. xxxvi.* sec. 25; Paulin. *Vit.* ii. 33; Sozom. vii. 22; Ambr. sec. 31. See Rufin. *H. E.*, Theodoret, v. 24.

[2] He had sent to ask the advice of the hermit, John of Lycopolis, whose answer had been affirmative as to the war, but had implied the death of Theodosius. See Claudian, *in Eutrop.* 312; Sozom. vii. 22, etc.

[3] On this battle, see the fine verses of Claudian, *De tert. cons. Honorii*, 90. The site is probably near the village of Heidenschafft.

[4] *Enarr. in Ps. xxxvi.* sec. 25; Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, v. 26; Oros. vii. 35. See Claudian, *Paneg. de iii. cons. Honorii*, 93. For a full and pleasing account of these events, see Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, i. 158-169.

the Emperor as he rode to the first day's battle; and God had granted him the victory—one of the two only which the East gained over the West—by an interposition like that which enabled Joshua to triumph over the five kings at Beth-horon. The puppet-Emperor Eugenius was taken and beheaded. Arbogast fled into the mountains, and finally, in despair, fell on his own sword. Ambrose had returned to his post in August, and Theodosius at once requested him to offer up public thanks to Almighty God. Ambrose tells him that he had laid his letter on the altar, and carried it in his hand while he "offered the sacrifice,"[1] that the Emperor's faith might speak by his voice. Theodosius not only granted his friend's entreaty that he would make a merciful use of his victory, but piously abstained from offering himself at the Lord's table because of the blood which he had recently shed.[2] Whem Ambrose hurried to Aquileia to see him, the Emperor flung himself at his feet, and said that it was to his merits and prayers that he owed his deliverance.

The aesthetic recognition of Jupiter and Hercules by the phantom Eugenius was "the last recrudescence of Paganism." It was the conviction of the power and the destiny of the Christian faith which inspired Theodosius even in the face of apparent defeat. It was the indignity of seeming to retire before idols which had decided him to face the second battle. He as firmly believed that on the second day of the battle the Apostles fought for him as the Romans believed that the Great Twin Brethren had fought for them at the battle of the Lake Regillus. Eugenius had placed in the Alpine passes statues of Jupiter, of which the hands were in act to hurl a golden thunderbolt. Theodosius overthrew the statues and contemptuously gave the golden thunderbolts to his outriders. "By such lightnings," said the well-pleased soldiers, "may we be often struck!" The great Emperor unbent from his stateliness and joined in their merriment. Thus did Paganism perish in a burst of laughter!"[3]

Early the next year the Emperor fell ill, and on Jan. 17,

[1] *Ep.* lxi. 5. [2] *De obit. Theodos.* 34.

[3] We owe the anecdote to Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*, v. 26); see Hodgkin, i. 169. We notice that the year of the death of Theodosius was also that in which Augustine was consecrated Bishop of Hippo, and Jerome had completed half of his twenty years' toil on the Vulgate. "Thus three of the four greatest Latin Fathers —Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome—saw the beginning of the downfall of the Empire, while the fourth, Gregory (540-604), after two centuries, saw its ruin completed by the invasion of the Lombards."

395, while he was still in the flower of his days, "his life lies like a ruined sea-wall amidst the fierce barbarian tide, leaving ravaged lands beyond." He breathed his last in the arms of Ambrose, commending to him with his last breath the interests of his orphaned sons Arcadius, aged eighteen, and Honorius, aged eleven, between whom he divided the Empire which was never again reunited. Honorius had hurried from Constantinople to the death-bed of his father. Forty days after Theodosius had expired Ambrose delivered his funeral oration in the presence of the new Emperor, his court, and his army. The corpse lay in the basilica preparatory to its removal to the tombs of the Emperors in the Eastern capital. Never was there an occasion more impressive. If the funeral oration of Ambrose was less magnificent than that which Massilon delivered before the coffin which contained the mortal remains of Louis XIV., it was more sincere, and the eulogy was far better deserved. Whatever may have been his faults, Theodosius was a truly great man and a benefactor of his race. In the East he had saved the Empire from the terror of the Goths; in the West he had avenged the murder of Gratian on the usurper Maximus, and the murder of Valentinian II. on the barbarian Arbogast and his creature Eugenius. He had restored and reunited in his own person the Empire of Constantine. He had trampled out the last embers of Paganism, and within the limits of the Empire, though not beyond its boundaries, he had secured the dominance of the Nicene faith over the Arian, which had gained so greatly from the tyrannous despotism of a Constantius, a Valens, and a Justina. He had finished the work which Constantine had begun. Ambrose had never feared, had never flattered, had often withstood him, but he had loved him with deep regard, and spoke of him with heartfelt honour.

And well might he have been filled with the gloomiest thoughts if he could have foreseen the horrors of the future! The successors of the strong and upright soldier were the sullen, stupid Arcadius, the half-imbecile and pale-blooded Honorius. They had inherited the lymphatic temperament and vapid character of their mother Flaccilla. Nothing roused either Emperor except some transport of jealousy against the men who overshadowed their insignificance. At the court of Honorius, overtowering all others in eminence and integrity, was the valiant Vandal—

"Emicuit Stilichonis apex, et cognita fulsit
Canities."

Arcadius, cajoled by the greedy Rufinus, crippled Stilicho on the very eve of a great victory. Honorius, swayed by the suppler ruffian Olympius, in the year 408 basely assassinated the protector of his youth, the father of his consorts, the bulwark of his kingdom. When Honorius, two years later, heard from an agitated officer the news of the fall of Rome, he was quite startled, and thinking that his favourite hen was dead, exclaimed, "Rome perished! why she was feeding out of my hand only an hour ago!" "It is the *city* Rome which has been destroyed by Alaric." "Oh," said the Emperor with a sigh of relief, "I thought you meant *my fowl* Rome."[1] Such was the imperial epitaph on the Eternal City!

But Ambrose might have wept far more bitter tears if he could have realised the slow deterioration of the Christian character which had come from its infection by the hollow glitter and deathfulness of the courts of Ravenna and Byzantium. The new type of the Christian politician and the Christian *littérateur* which were then coming to the front were not pleasant specimens to contemplate. "Salt like this, which had utterly lost its savour, was in a certain sense worse than anything which had been seen on the dunghill of Pagan imperial Rome, and was fit for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of man."[2]

We have but few remaining records of the bishop's life. Paulinus tells us some more of his miraculous stories. Among others he narrates that a certain Cresconius had taken refuge in the church, and that Stilicho, seizing the opportunity of the absence of the people in consequence of an exhibition of wild beasts given by Honorius, sent soldiers to tear him from the sanctuary. Prostrate before the altar Ambrose was indignantly mourning over the violation of the asylum when news was brought him that the leopards had burst with a sudden spring upon the soldiers in the amphitheatre and grievously mangled them. Stilicho was so much struck with the circumstance that he restored Cresconius to the sanctuary.

A bright and happy circumstance of the year 397—the last year of the life of Ambrose—was the embassy sent to him by

[1] Procopius, *De Bello Vandalico*, i. 2. [2] Hodgkin, i. 337.

Fritigil, Queen of the Marcomanni. She had heard of the bishop from some Italian Christians, and begged him to write to her an account of the Christian religion. He did so in the form of a catechism. She was so much struck with this, that not only did she and her husband submit herself to the Empire, but they travelled to Milan for the sole purpose of enjoying the personal intercourse of their instructor. They arrived too late. By the time they reached Milan Ambrose was dead. "It is a death-blow for all Italy," exclaimed Stilicho; and he was right.[1]

It is said that Stilicho entreated the friends of Ambrose and the chief citizens of Milan to go to the bishop and induce him to pray to God that his life might be prolonged. "I have not so lived among you," he answered, "that I am ashamed to live; nor do I fear to die, because we have a merciful Lord."[2]

One day, as he lay ill, four of his deacons were whispering together in low tones at a great distance from his sick bed, about the person who was most fit to be his successor. Among others they mentioned Simplicianus, when they were amazed to hear the bishop exclaim three times, "An old man, but a good."

On another occasion he was praying with a bishop named Bassianus when he told him that he saw the Lord Jesus approaching him with a smile upon His face.

On the day of his death, Good Friday, April 4, 397, he lay from five o'clock in the afternoon till late at night with his arms outstretched in the form of a cross. His lips moved, but his friends could not hear his voice. Honoratus, Bishop of Vercellae, had laid himself down to sleep in the upper part of the house when he fancied that he heard a voice thrice say to him, "Rise, make haste, he is on the point of death." He rose and administered the sacrament to his dying friend. Immediately after he had received the elements Ambrose expired. He was in the fifty-seventh year of his age, and had been Bishop of Milan for twenty-two years.

His body was carried to the Church dedicated to Protasius and Gervasius,[3] and there on Easter Eve the children who were

[1] Paulin. *Vit.* p. 45: "Comes Stilicho dixisse fertur quod tanto viro recedente de corpore interitus immineret Italiae."

[2] Paulin. sec. 45; Possid. *Vit. Aug.* 27.

[3] Now the Chiesa di S. Ambrogio. It is believed that his body rests under the altar.

to be baptized fancied that they saw him seated on his episcopal throne, while others said they saw a star shining above his corpse. When Rhadagaisius was besieging Florence Ambrose appeared to one of the citizens, and promised that they should be delivered the next day: a vision which was fulfilled by the complete victory of Stilicho. Again, when Mascezel was leading his army against Gildo in Africa, and was in utter despair, he told Paulinus and other priests that he had seen Ambrose come to him with a staff in his hand, and thrice strike the ground with the words, "Here, here, here." Accordingly, on that very spot, three days afterwards, Mascezel won a complete and final victory. These and other semi-miraculous narratives about him are related by his biographer. If they show nothing else, they at least show the intense impression which he had left on the minds of his contemporaries. Even his spirit was looked upon as a guardian angel of the Church and Empire, which in his lifetime he had so often protected.

But Ambrose needs not the pale and sickly gleam of ecclesiastical miracles to enhance the glory of his memory.[1] Paulinus, amid a crowd of prodigies, tells us that a few days before his last sickness he had seen him expounding in church the 43d psalm, and that while he was speaking a lambent fire like a shield shone round his head and made his countenance as white as snow. This transfiguration was purely subjective. The aureole was but a reflexion of the reverence felt by the secretary for his great master, but few have better deserved the golden light with which painters surround the brows of saints. Ambrose had his weaknesses like all other men. In his relic-worship, his extravagant estimate of the intrinsic merits of virginity and of asceticism, his dangerous assumption of priestly autocracy, and his confusion of the Eucharist with the sacrifice of the mass, he shared in the errors of his times. He was not a deep or a con-

[1] There are states of mind to which, as Mr. Froude says, "the distinction between objective and subjective truth has no existence." The miracles related by Paulinus of Ambrose, by Sulpicius Severus of Martin of Tours, and by Pontius of Cyprian, are not pure inventions. Sometimes they are rhetoric turned into logic; or metaphors translated into fact; or spiritual events clothed (as in the *Pilgrim's Progress*) in objective garb; or simple exaggerations of actual but uncommon occurrences. We do not reject them because they are miraculous, but because they are often meaningless and contrary to the known method of God's dealings even in His supernatural manifestations, and, above all, because they are without a single tittle of adequate evidence.

secutive thinker; he was in no respect an original teacher;[1] he sometimes pushed his hierarchical pretensions into arrogant intolerance. But his merits far outweighed the harm done by his intellectual limitations. He restored all Italy to a firm and true faith.[2] He was the bulwark of the cause of the Church.[3] He maintained the testimony of Christ even before kings, and was not ashamed. He showed how feeble was imperial despotism before the dauntless impotence of a spiritual power. He presents us with one of the highest types of a great Christian bishop, who by his faith, goodness, and disinterested self-denial, became a bulwark alike of his nation and of the Church. He was every inch a man. The firm dignity of a Roman senator and the stern mission of a Hebrew prophet was in him softened by the compassionate sympathy of a true servant of Christ. A Roman by birth, a magistrate in rank, a bishop by election, he was the precursor of a new social order, and he combined in his single person the daring independence of a Thomas of Canterbury with the loyal usefulness of a Suger.[4] He was at once a spiritual ruler and a devoted statesman. He faced in turn the opposition of Valentinian I., of Justina, of Valentinian II., of Maximus, Eugenius, Arbogast, and Theodosius himself; but to three of these sovereigns, as well as to his much loved Gratian, he was a faithful servant and a paternal adviser.

Ambrose was a voluminous, but for the most part a second-hand writer. He wielded the bishop's crozier more powerfully than the author's pen. His ethical system is largely based on that of the Stoics; his doctrine is chiefly that of Basil; his ascetic views those of Gregory of Nyssa; his exegesis that of Philo and Origen. But lack of intellectual independence was partly compensated by wide culture. Among Greek classic writers he quotes Thales, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Homer, Euripides, and others; among Latins, Virgil, Cicero, Pliny, and others. He had also some knowledge of the popular science of the day. He said with perfect modesty to his people,

[1] To this fact Jerome makes some almost insulting allusions, and in his *De Virr. illustr.* coldly says—"De quo, quia superest, meum judicium subtraham, ne in alterutram partem aut adulatio in me reprehendatur aut veritas."

[2] Jer. *Chronic. Grat. iii. et Equit. coss.* "Post Auxentii seram mortem, Mediolani Ambrosio constituto, omnis ad rectam fidem Italia convertitur."

[3] Rufin. *Invect. ii. in Hieron.* "Qui non solum Mediolanensis Ecclesiae verum etiam omnium Ecclesiarum columna quaedam et turris inexpugnabilis fuit."

[4] See De Broglie, vi. 453.

"I have begun to teach you what I have not yet learnt."[1] Yet he considered authorship to be a distinct part of his ministerial and episcopal duty.

His works fall under six divisions, which are not, however, very distinctly marked.[2] They are—

1. *Sermons.*—These—whether dogmatic, exegetic, or occasional—are always practical in their tendency, but are less remarkable for eloquence than for edification. They are the sermons of a Roman and a ruler, and one who had known the world.[3] It was the forthrightness of them, the tone of sincerity ringing through them, which, joined to the singular personal attractiveness and ascendency of the speaker, charmed the ear and touched the heart of Augustine. The ἦθος—what Americans call the magnetism—of the speaker must have constituted their chief force. In many instances they must have told with an effect all the more thrilling upon the mind of the congregation at Milan because they abound in allusions to the trials and ever-shifting alarms of the time. Their chief value consists in their manly and practical directness. Often—as in his *Hexaemeron*—Ambrose chose the same texts or treated the same subjects as Basil, but,

[1] *De offic.* i. 1.

[2] Works of St. Ambrose (with Approximate Dates).

A.D.
375. De Paradiso.
De Cain et Abel.
376. De Tobia.
377. De Virginibus.
378. De Vidius.
De Virginitate.
379. De Fide, lib. 1-5.
De excessu fratris Satyri.
De Noe et Arca.
381. De Spiritu Sancto.
382. De incarnationis dominicae Sacramento.
383. De interpellatione Job et David, lib. 1-4.
385. De Poenitentia.
386. Expositio in Psalm. 119.
Expos. Evang. sec. Lucam lib. 1-10.
387. 388. De Abraham, lib. 1, 2.
De Isaac et anima.
De bono mortis.
De fuga saeculi.
De Jacob et vita beata, lib. 1, 2.
De Joseph patriarcha.
De benedictionibus patriarcharum.
De mysteriis.

A.D.
388. Hexaemeron, lib. 1-6.
389. De Elia et jejunio.
390. De officiis ministrorum, lib. 1-3.
392. De institutione Virginis.
De obitu Valentiniani.
393. Exhortatio Virginitatis.
394. De Nabuthe.
395. De obitu Theodosii.
Enarrationes in 12 psalmos.

Epistolae xci.
Hymni.

Works of doubtful genuineness are De Sacramentis, lib. 1-6; De lapsu Virginis consecratae; Apologia Prophetae David. Some of his works are lost, as, for instance, the one (Aug. *Ep.* xxxi.) in which he showed that Christianity was in no respect borrowed from Plato.
The Commentary on St. Paul's Epistles, De 42 mansionibus, De Trinitate, and Sermones, are by Ambrosiaster.

[3] Richter, *Gesch. d. Weström. Reichs*, 602, speaks of "priesterlich-theatralischen Pathos, Uebertriebung und ungeschmack"; but his eloquence won the Arians from Justina, made Theodosius quail, helped to convert Augustine, and was so powerful that mothers kept their daughters from church lest he should persuade them to take the veil.

if he did so with less learning, with fewer allusions, and less literary grace and culture, he did so in a more useful and sober manner. Take, for instance, his remarks on almsgiving. The eulogies on that great duty were far too sweeping and indiscriminate in the sermons of the great teachers of the fourth century. But Ambrose, while he admired almsgiving no less than they, is yet careful to point out that almsgiving to impostors and vagabonds, doles given without due enquiry and consideration, are a premium offered to greed, deceit, and vice.[1]

2. *Letters.*—These have not the charm and sweetness which often marks the letters of Gregory and Basil, nor have they the fiery personalities and imaginative vividness which give such strange interest to those of Jerome; but they have a special interest of their own, and are full of value alike for the history of those times, and as illustrations of the character of this great ecclesiastic.[2] They are mostly letters of a public character, like those of Cyprian.

3. *Exegetic writings.*[3]—These are of less value than any which have come from the pen of Ambrose. In Scripture interpretation he was of necessity *serus studiorum*, and he borrows his principles of exegesis exclusively from the Greek Fathers, Hippolytus, Origen, Didymus, and especially the three Cappadocians, of whom the two Gregorys were largely influenced by the allegorising fancies of Origen.[4] His exposition belongs to the genus which Sixtus Sevensis defines as "*thematica.*" It endeavours to find in one particular fragment of Scripture the complete portrayal of the matter specially in hand.[5] He adopts the already-current and arbitrary threefold method of interpretation, so as to find in each passage an historic, moral, and spiritual or mystic meaning. The spiritual meaning is in many places so exclusively insisted

[1] *De off.* ii. 16. Ozanam says "Dans sa langage il y a je ne sais quel miel attique," and Ebert goes so far as to call him "the Christian Cicero."

[2] Symmachus once wrote to thank Theodosius for sending Sarmatian captives to fight in the arena, and often writes to others about the purchase of race-horses, wild beasts, and gladiators. How different are the letters of Ambrose!

[3] The *Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul*, written when Damasus was Pope (see *on* 1 *Tim. iii.* 15) was long attributed to Ambrose, and printed with his works. The author is now quoted as *Ambrosiaster*, but it is not certain who he was.

[4] Jer. *Ep.* lxv., *ad Pammachium.* "Nuper Ambrosius sic Hexaemeron Origenis compilavit, ut magis Hippolyti sententias Basiliique sequeretur." The passage in which he is compared to a crow, decked out in alien colours but *totus ipse tenebrosus*, is quoted by Rufinus, *Invect.* ii.

[5] Sixt. Sevens. *Bibl. Sanct.* iii.; *Meth.* 22.

on, that hardly any of the historic sense remains. This is specially observable when he deals with the lapses of Old Testament saints, such as the drunkenness of Noah, the concubinage of Abraham, the incest of Lot.[1] The only method known to the Fathers of escaping the insulting criticism of the Manichees was to give to such narratives an explanation almost exclusively allegorical. Augustine tells us that it was from Ambrose that he learned this strange method of illustrating the misapplied and misinterpreted text: "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." He had not known how to answer the Manichean objections till he heard Ambrose "spiritually unfolding, by a removal of the mystic veil, the things which, taken literally, seemed to teach perversity."[2] Any value which may attach to the exegetic treatises of Ambrose is purely secondary. It lies in accidental and separable remarks, not by any means in the radically unsound method of interpretation which he adopts, and which his influence helped to perpetuate for so many years. But he did for Latin theology what Cicero did for Latin philosophy, by enriching it from the stores of Greek literature.[3]

4. *Ascetic writings.*—These show St. Ambrose on his weakest side. They are even more devoid of originality than his other works. Deep as was his passion for the virgin life—a passion due, no doubt, in great measure to the early influence exercised over him by his sister Marcellina,—and ecstatic as are the praises which he heaps upon it, he has nothing to say or to urge in its favour but what had been already said more powerfully by Basil and Gregory of Nyssa. His view of virginity and asceticism is not quite so fantastic and unevangelical as Jerome's.[4] It is based to a large extent on the unconscious Manicheism which had

[1] In preaching against extravagance in dress, he imagines that the ladies will say to him, "Oh, but bishop, Rebecca had earrings and bracelets!" and he proceeds to tell them that Rebecca's earrings were pious attention and her bracelets good deeds! (*De Abrah.* i. 9). So Mesopotamia is a type of the Church, which is "*duobus* stipata fluminibus, *lavacro gratiae et fletu poenitentiae* (id. i. 87).

[2] Aug. *Conf.* vi. 4. This method is specially illustrated in the earlier books of Ambrose, *De Noe et Arca, De Isaac, De benedictionibus patriarcharum*, etc. The method is due partly to the obstinate pride of Rabbinism, but chiefly to allegorising processes borrowed by Philo from the Stoics. For instance, Ambrose elaborately compares the structure of the Ark with that of the human body!

[3] Wordsworth, *Ch. Hist.* iii. 70. Plitt says of Ambrose's commentaries: "Alle diese Schriften sind in der damals herrschenden allegorisenden Art gehalten, aber wir finden auch viele vortrefflichen Bemerkungen."

[4] See *De Virginibus*, I. viii. secs. 34, 35; *De Abrah.* i. 3, sec. 19: "Discant homines conjugia non spernere."

tainted the thought of his age, and which was the result of alien Eastern influences, defended, as an afterthought, by irrelevant and misinterpreted texts in defiance of the entire general tenor of Holy Writ. Ambrose, however, dwelt more on the worries and troubles of marriage, and made the wise remark that marriage was for nearly all, virginity only for the few.[1] Ambrose, who was a foe to all individualism, condemned Jovinian as Siricius had condemned him at Rome and Jerome had raved at him from Bethlehem. Nevertheless, whatever may have been the errors into which Jovinian may have been driven, as men usually are, by the necessary vehemence of a righteous but one-sided reaction, yet, in his view of the Christian's union with Christ, of the indifference of meats, of the equal honourableness of marriage and celibacy, of the danger of a legalistic will-worship, of the evil of a twofold standard of morality—one for the masses and the other for the few—and of the extravagant importance attached to external actions, he was far more in the right than those by whom he was anathematised. The future did justice to the views which the present reviled indeed but could not refute.

5. *Dogmatic writings.*—In these writings there is again little originality. They are derived almost exclusively from the Greek Fathers.[2] In the *De Fide* and *De Spiritu* he closely follows Basil. The extent to which Ambrose was indebted to others made Jerome compare him to a crow in borrowed feathers. He shared the views of his time, but expresses them with none of the systematic precision and inferential compactness and hardy acceptance of extremest consequences which mark the dogmatism of Augustine. He makes the wise remark that it has not pleased God to reveal to us His plan of salvation in dialectical form.[3] Theoretically he holds that no one can be saved without baptism ; yet he will not condemn unbaptized infants to eternal punishment, and he considers that Valentinian's *desire* to be baptized was practically baptism. In the Lord's Supper, if we may accept *literally* his rhetorical expressions, he seems to have sunk into the doctrine of transubstantiation, or something not easily distinguishable

[1] *De Virg.* l. c. "Ergo dissuades nuptias ? ego vero suadeo et eos damno qui dissuadere consuerunt."

[2] He accepts the unfortunate doctrine of a ransom paid to the devil in the Atonement, and his being *tricked* by the Incarnation. *Expos. in Luc.* iv. secs. 12, 16.

[3] *De Fide*, i. 5, sec. 42 : "Non in dialectica complacuit Deo salvum facere populum suum."

from it.[1] He paid high respect to the see of Rome, though in a perfectly independent way. He says of St. Peter's confession, "Strive that thou too be a rock, and so seek the rock, not without thee, but within thee. Thy rock is thy conduct and thy mind. On this rock thy house is built."[2] And again, "Faith, then, is the foundation of the Church; for it is said, not of the flesh of Peter, but of faith, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Perhaps his most original book is *On the Blessing of Death*, in which he takes a singularly mild view of the future punishment of the wicked, expresses his belief in a purifying fire, and argues that, whatever that punishment be, it is a state distinctly preferable to a sinful life.[3] His eschatology was deeply influenced by the larger hopes of Origen, though he did not blindly follow him.[4] But the dogmatic teaching of Ambrose has no independent authority. It is simply what he caught up entire from his Greek teachers when he—an unbaptized catechuman—was transferred in eight days from the civil tribunals to the most influential bishopric of the West. "I must at once learn," he says, "and teach, since I had no leisure to learn before."[5] He was far more a practical teacher than a scientific theologian.[6]

6. As a moral teacher we see Ambrose at his best. His chief ethical book is that *On the Duties of the Clergy*. It is avowedly founded on Cicero's *De officiis*, and only differs from it in its Christian standpoint and its Scriptural illustrations. It abounds in noble precepts, but lacks the specifically Christian impress. In its applications, little reference is made to the professed truths on which it is based. He is hampered throughout by the adoption of the ancient fourfold division of virtues into wisdom, justice, courage, and prudence—a classification not exhaustive—and abounding in cross-divisions. His illustrations are taken almost exclusively from the Old Testament, and the ideal of

[1] *De Myst.* i. 9, sec. 53: "Nos conficinius corpus Christi."

[2] *De Incarn. Dom.* iv. 32: "Petrus primatum egit confessionis non honoris; fidei non ordinis" (which Baunard renders *non seulement . . . mais aussi!* Plitt). *In Luc. Exp.* vi. sec. 98. "Enitere ergo ut et tu petra sis."

[3] *De bono mortis*, sec. 38. In this book he is influenced by the uncanonical Fourth Book of Esdras. He believes in the efficacy of prayer for the dead. See *De excess. Sat.* 80.

[4] See Förster, *Ambrosius*, 113 ff. Thus he rejects *material* torments. *Expos. in Luc. lib.* vii. 204 f.

[5] *De off.* i. 1, sec. 4. See Pruner, *Die Theologie des H. Ambrosius*, Eichstätt, 1862.

[6] "Ein Vorkämpfer für die kirchlichen Interessen, weniger ein speculativer Kopf und systematischer Denker."—Förster, p. 124.

Christ Himself is perpetually fading and vanishing from his pages. To produce a book of Christian ethics was an original, a valuable, and a fruitful attempt; but the attempt is carried out in a very imperfect manner. Ambrose is betrayed into fatal error by the feebleness of the exegesis of his age. He has, if possible, even less perception than many of his contemporaries of the relation of the Gospel to the Law. This deficiency, together with a misapprehension of one or two isolated passages in the Gospels, led him into the dangerous error of distinguishing between ordinary duties and counsels of perfection—an error which deeply vitiated the view of his age, and led, on the one hand, to the belief in "works of supererogation," with all the boundless hierarchical abuses deduced from it; and, on the other, to many deep and terrible corruptions of monastic practice and monastic theory.

7. Lastly, Ambrose is the author of hymns which have been of inestimable advantage to the Christian Church. The practice of antiphonal congregational singing, which he introduced from the East, has not only added an untold beauty and sweetness to Christian worship, but from the days of Augustine downwards has influenced the hearts of many who could not have been touched by any other means. They were distinctly intended to teach the truth. "They say," he remarks, "that the people has been deceived by my hymns. I do not in the least deny it. That is a great incantation, and none is more potent. What is more potent than a confession of the Trinity which is now heard daily on the lips of all the people? All therefore have been (by these verses) made teachers, who before were scarcely able to be learners."[1] He deserves to share with Hilary the proud title of "the Father of Latin Hymnology";[2] and Latin hymnology, if less imaginative, is also less fantastic, more "simple, sensuous, passionate" than Greek hymnology.[3] It speaks the language of

[1] There is a play on the double meaning of *carmen*, a hymn and an incantation.

[2] See *Dict. of Christian Anth.* s. v. v. "Ambrosian Music" and "Liturgies." Hilary of Poictiers is also said to have written a Hymnarium (Jer. *De Virr. illustr.*) His hymns are written in *iambic dimeter acatalectic*—"Dĕus crĕātŏr ŏmnĭum." Biraghi (*Inni sinceri di S. Ambrogio*, Milan, 1862) says of them that "they are like ancient inscriptions written on marble monuments in few but incisive verses. No glittering flashes, but the calm light of spiritual enthusiasm." The "Ambrosian Liturgy" still used at Milan is traced back by tradition to St. Barnabas, but there is no very ancient MS. of it. See *supra*, i. 466.

[3] See Ozanam, *La Civilisation au V^e Siècle*, ii. 263. Bishop Wordsworth (*Ch. Hist.* iii. 74) traces the influence of Ambrose in the thoughts of Keble.

the deepest and most sincere emotions. Many indeed of the so-called "Ambrosian hymns" are not by Ambrose, but they are imitations of his rhythm and of his manner; and he who wrote the morning hymn *Æterne rerum conditor*, the evening hymn *Deus creator omnium*, and the Christmas hymn *Veni redemptor gentium*,[1] would have been a benefactor of the Church even if this had been the only service which he had ever rendered. In the case of Ambrose it was but one of the smallest services in the long and noble life of the Basil of the West, the precursor of Gregory VII., but with a larger and more liberal intelligence.

In 824 another Bishop of Milan, Angilbert II., exhumed his remains from the spot where they lay between the martyrs Gervasius and Protasius and placed them in a sarcophagus of porphyry. Such a sarcophagus was discovered in 1864, and it is believed to be the one in which his body lay. It was opened in 1871, and declared to be genuine by the Pope in 1873.[2]

He is always painted as a bishop with pallium, mitre, and crozier. He is generally to be recognised by the beehive at his feet, alluding to the legend of his infancy; or the knotted scourge of three thongs in his hand, to imply his victory over the Arians; or with two bones in his hand, to indicate the discovery of the bodies of SS. Gervasius and Protasius.

The most famous picture in which he is represented is the magnificent Rubens in the Belvedere Gallery, Vienna, in which he repels Theodosius from the porch of the basilica. In this picture he does indeed appear as "le fougueux evêque qui osa fermer les portes de l'Église à Théodose" (Diderot).[3]

This is a fitting place at which to pause and to point out the general effect produced by the conversion of the Roman Empire on the society and history of the fourth century.

The misery of that epoch was intense. The whole framework of society was affected by the long atrophy of Paganism. There existed on all sides the terrible contrast—always a dark omen for any land—between boundless wealth on the one hand and grind-

[1] See Trench, *Sacred Latin Poetry*, 80-86. The *Te Deum*, which is legendarily said to have been composed by Ambrose at the baptism of Augustine, is certainly not by him.

[2] Biraghi, *I tre sepolcri Santambrosiani*, Mil. 1864.

[3] On the representations of St. Ambrose in painting, see Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art*, i. 300-308.

ing poverty on the other. The middle classes had to a great extent disappeared, and since manual labour was regarded as dishonourable, there was little to bridge the deep chasm between the owners of vast estates and the idle dependent herd of slaves and servile clients. The vast imports of wheat rendered agriculture unprofitable, and consequently it was neglected. Upon the peasantry the burden of taxation fell with terrible incidence, and was made much worse by the irresponsible exactions of a vulture-crowd of officials intent only upon enriching themselves. The proceeds of these taxes went to support the insolence of a half-barbarian army and the enormous luxury of an unwieldy court. The Emperor in his isolated splendour was unapproachable by the mass of the population, and besides, being himself in many cases a helpless puppet in the hands of unscrupulous ministers, he might be as ignorant as Louis XV. of the despotic crimes and untold misery which existed at his very gates. The cities were constantly growing in size; the country was depleted and desolate; mendicancy increased on every side; and in the general despair as to amelioration the barbarians were looked to by many in the light of deliverers. The Church, and the Church alone, cared for the poor, and of this fact the Emperor Julian is an unsuspected witness. Her charity might often be indiscriminate and unsuccessful, but she protected those whom the State oppressed, and relieved those whom the State abandoned. When rich men were hoarding their corn stores even in the days of famine—when neither sophist nor Emperor nor Pagan priest reproved their greed—the voices of Basil and Ambrose and Chrysostom forced them for very shame to open their granaries. The bishops alone tried to heal the eating ulcer of usury.[1] They were rightly regarded as the true *defensores civitatis*. The Church waited with her gentlest and unwearied ministrations by the miserable deathbed of the ancient world.

No one was more active than Ambrose in these works of mercy. No nobler representative of the Church in its best aspects could be found. Constantly was his voice raised against the oppression of the rich while he faithfully warned against the lying imposture of the mendicants.[2] When men were unjustly persecuted, he extended to them the rights of asylum. When multitudes were taken prisoners in the incessant battles against rebels and invaders, he unhesitatingly melted down the sacred

[1] Ambr. *De Tobia*, 7. [2] *De offic. ministr.* ii. 15. Jer. *Ep. ad Nepotian.*

vessels to purchase their ransom.[1] Nobody spoke more boldly against vice. He denounced the customs of drinking toasts,[2] and put down the vice of revelling on the feast days of martyrs. He rebuked the perfumed and luxurious youths;[3] the women who reclined on silver couches and drank in jewelled cups;[4] the men who delighted in porphyry tables and gilded fretwork, and cared more for their hounds and horses than for their fellow-Christians.[5] Nor did he less faithfully denounce the idle multitude who patronised the madness of the circus and the vice of the theatre.[6] To the rich he said: "You clothe the walls of your houses and leave the poor unclad; the naked wail at your gates, and your only thought is of the marble with which you shall overlay your floors; he begs for bread, and your horse has a golden bit. Costly apparel delights you, while others lack food. The very jewel in your ring would protect from hunger a mass of people."[7] To the poor he preached: "Be sober, be diligent, awake to worthier efforts and nobler aims."

It may be said, and said with truth, that on the other side of the picture must be set some evils. Among these we must reckon the growth of half-Pagan superstitions thinly veiled under Christian sanctions; the deepening tendency to usurp and tyrannise on the part of a clergy who had now been elevated from humble ministers into a supernatural caste; and, perhaps above all, the tendency to look on the ascetic and monastic life as necessary for all who aimed at perfection. It was mainly from this cause that "religion" ran the risk of becoming supercilious and exclusive; and while on the one hand there were thousands of monks and virgins and celibate priests, who often enjoyed a reputation for holiness without the reality, there were on the other a countless multitude who came to think that "religion" was not for them, and who were only nominally influenced by the truths of the Gospel.[8]

It has often been a question whether Christianity must be reckoned or not among the causes which overthrew the empire of the Latin world. That such was the case can hardly be doubted. It exercised on the sway and the institutions of

[1] Jer. *Ep. ad Nepotian*, 21.
[2] "Videtur non amare Imperatorem qui pro ejus salute non biberit."
[3] *De Elia.* 12. [4] *De Nabuthe*, 5, 13. [5] Id. 13.
[6] *De fug. saec.* [7] *De Nabuthe*, 6, 7.
[8] On the subject of these paragraphs, see Förster, *Ambros.* 1-16: and Hodgkin, vol. ii.

Paganism a benumbing and disintegrating force. Men who had once felt confident in the protection of Mavors and Romulus and Victory were now profoundly disheartened. The anchor of their old polytheism was rudely torn up, and they drifted on the open sea of doubt. The general indifference to all things earthly caused by too predominant and exclusive a love for the world beyond the grave, tending ever to multiply the inert masses of monks and solitaries, was another weakening influence. All this had long been fore-ordained in the plans of the Eternal Providence. Long had the fiat gone forth—

> "Rome shall perish! Write that word
> In the blood that she hath spilt!
> Perish hopeless and abhorred
> Deep in ruin as in guilt."

Nothing could alleviate the long slow agony of that decay, in which

> "Rome herself was bane unto herself,
> And she, whom mighty kingdoms curtsied to,
> Like a forlorn and desperate castaway
> Did shameful execution on herself."

It was written in the decrees of God that the Gospel of His Son should hasten the final fall of the Old World; that amid its crumbling ruins it might rear fairer and nobler kingdoms which He Himself would "build with fair stones and lay their foundations with sapphires."

XVI

ST. JEROME[1]

SECTION I

YOUTH AND EDUCATION OF JEROME

STRIDON was a little town on the borders of Dalmatia and Pannonia, in the diocese of Aquileia. It was destroyed by the Goths even in the days of St. Jerome, and its site is unknown. When the saint speaks of "his native land," he seems to speak of Pannonia. Domnus, one of the bishops who subscribed to the creed of Nice, calls himself "a bishop of Stridon from

[1] ST. JEROME'S WORKS.

Ed. Princeps, Bishop Andreas, and Theodorus of Gaza, Rome, 1470. This, like the editions of 1476, 1479, and others in the fifteenth century, was very incomplete. The first comparatively complete editions were that of Erasmus, 1516-1520, 9 vols. folio, 2d ed. 1565, Basle; Marianus Victorius, 1565 ff. (often reprinted), Rome; F. H. Calixt and Tribbechovius, Frankfort, 1684 ff. 12 vols. folio; Martianay, 1693-1706; Vallarsi, Veron. 1734-1742, 11 vols. folio, 2d ed. Venice, 1766-1772; Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, xxvii.-xxxiii. Paris, 1845 (mainly a reprint of the second edition of Vallarsi). The *Quaestiones Hieronymianae* of Le Clerc was published at Amsterdam, 1700.

There are lives of St. Jerome attributed to Gennadius and Eusebius of Cremona, which are reprinted, together with various apocryphal letters of Augustine, Cyril of Jerusalem, etc., in Vallarsi, vol. xi. 1-280; Migne, vol. 1 (*Patrologia Latina*, vol. xxvii.), and in other editions. There are separate lives by Baronius, Du Pin, Martianay, Tillemont, Ceillier, Seb. Dolci, Stilting, Schröckh; Engelstoft, *Hieron. Stridonensis*, Havn. 1797; D. v. Cölln, in Ersch. u. Gruber, *Encyclop.* sec. ii. vol. 8, Leipzig, 1831; Hagenbach, in Herzog, *Realencycl.*; J. W. Baum, *Hieronymi Vita*, Strasburg, 1835; Montalembert, *Les Moines d'Occident*, i. 144-187, Paris, 1861; J. T. Collombet, *Hist. de St. Jérome*, Paris, 1844; Otto Zöckler, *Hieronymus Sein Leben und Wirken*, Gotha, 1865; Amédée Thierry, *St. Jérome*, Paris, 1867; Fremantle, *Dict. of Christ. Biography*, iii. 29-50, London, 1882.

There are sketches of the life and works of St. Jerome, more or less complete, in the works of Alban Butler, Neander, Gieseler, Schaff, Milman, De Broglie, and Möhler.

Pannonia," but there was no bishop of Stridon in Jerome's day, and the superscription is of doubtful genuineness.[1]

Whether we regard Jerome as a Pannonian or as a Dalmatian, he had a very low opinion of the moral condition of the people among whom he lived. "In my country," he says, "rudeness is indigenous, the god is the belly; men live for the present only; the richer a man is the more saintly is he."[2] He goes on to say, "like people, like priests." Lupicinus, the bishop, was as bad as his flock. "The worm-eaten vessel had a weak pilot, and the blind led the blind into the ditch." Even after making allowance for the splenetic mood in which Jerome often poured forth his thoughts, it is clear that he had no great affection for the place of his birth. He scarcely ever alludes to Stridon. When he was called there by duty his chief friends and his chief interests were at the neighbouring towns of Æmona and Aquileia. Æmona was a fortified market town, larger and more important than the modern Laybach, which stands upon its site; Aquileia, which is now a straggling village of fourteen hundred inhabitants, was in Jerome's day a splendid commercial emporium, of which the ruined fragments attest the ancient magnificence. It had a mint of its own, and as the capital of Venetia stood forth among the great cities of Italy. Its military strength[3] enabled it to defy the army of Maximus in the third century (A.D. 238), and to baffle for three months the tremendous assault of Attila in the fifth (A.D. 452). In the churches, the monastery, and the stirring life of this city Jerome found an escape from the dulness and provincialism of his native Stridon.

His exact name is uncertain. He is often called Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus. Eusebius was the name of his father, and was perhaps given to the son. Whether he ever bore the name Sophronius is very doubtful. He never calls himself by that name, and it may possibly have arisen from some confusion with the Sophronius who, even in his lifetime, translated some of his works into Greek.[4]

The date of his birth is a matter of dispute. His younger contemporary Prosper, who is followed by many modern

[1] *Ep.* vii. 4, 5. It cannot be the Sidrona of Ptolemy (ii. 17) which was in Liburnia. Nor can it be Sdrigna in Istria, where the inhabitants show a tomb which they assert to be that of Eusebius, the father of Jerome. See Zöckler, p. 20.

[2] *Ep.* vii. 5.

[3] Amm. Marc. xxi. 12.

[4] See *De Virr. ill.* 134 (A.D. 392).

authorities, says that he was born A.D. 331, and that he died at the age of ninety-one.[1] Others—especially Baronius and Tillemont—think that he did not live beyond his seventy-eighth year, and therefore place his birth A.D. 342. Vallarsi furnishes many reasons for supposing that he was not born earlier than 346. This date seems the most probable, although there are not sufficient data for arriving at an exact decision.[2]

We can get but few and passing glimpses into the interior of the household in which Jerome passed his infancy and boyhood.[3] His father and his mother were both Christians, and he testifies that he was educated in the strictest Christian principles: "nurtured on Catholic milk from his very cradle, and all the more a Churchman because he had never been a heretic," although the Arians were making great exertions on every side.[4] But he shows a certain reticence about his early years.[5] Unlike Augustine, who tells us so much about his mother Monnica, unlike Gregory of Nazianzus, who dwells with such deep affection on the memory of his mother Nonna, St. Jerome has never even told us his mother's name, nor does he make any direct allusion to her in all his voluminous writings. It is possible that she died while he was yet a young man.[6] Of his father Eusebius he says scarcely anything. It is clear, however, that the family was in easy circumstances. Whatever may have been Jerome's other trials, he was never in want of money. He was able to travel over a great part of Europe and Syria, and even to carry with him a choice library which he could not have

[1] The life attributed to Gennadius says that he died at eighty-eight (in Migne, xxii. 184).

[2] Prosper's statement is obviously mistaken, for Jerome tells us (*Ep.* lii.) that he wrote his famous letter to Heliodorus (*Ep.* xiv.) when he was "*adolescens immo poene puer*" (*Ep.* lii. 1), and the date of this letter is A.D. 373. His first literary attempt—the letter to Innocentius—was written A.D. 370, and, according to Prosper's date, he would then have been thirty-nine years old. Further, he says that he was *a boy learning grammar* when Julian died, A.D. 363; whereas, if we accept Prosper's date, he was then thirty-two. Prosper was misled by some general and rhetorical expressions, as, for instance, when Jerome tells Augustine that he was to him "*aetate filius*" (*Ep.* cv. 5).

[3] He says: "*Quis nostrum non meminit infantiae suae,*" and tells us how in his later years he used to dream of himself as a boy (*comatulus*); but he has preserved very few anecdotes of his early years.

[4] *Ep.* lxxxii. 2.

[5] The chief allusions are in *Epp.* lii. lxviii., and some passages in his commentaries collected in Vallarsi, xi. 8 *sqq.*

[6] She was alive in 373 when he started for the East. *Ep.* xxii. 30: "Cum . . . *parentibus*, sorore, cognatis . . . me castrassem."

acquired without considerable expense.[1] He never grudged the outlay necessary for teachers and secretaries. He tells us of the luxurious table which he had enjoyed in his earlier years, but which he voluntarily abandoned.[2] He inherited an estate[3] which supplied all his wants, though when he sold it to support the influx of monks to Bethlehem, he modestly describes it as consisting of "half-ruined cottages which have escaped the hands of the barbarians."[4] But, though the parents of Jerome were well-to-do, there is a suspicion that they were of servile rank. Certain it is that John, Bishop of Jerusalem, in his complaints about the ordination of Paulinianus, the younger brother of Jerome, said that "he had been made a cleric from a slave."[5] If there had been no ground whatever for the taunt Jerome could instantly have answered it by an indignant disclaimer. Instead of this he only replies that others also of servile rank had been admitted to the presbyterate, and that Onesimus was ordained deacon by St. Paul. It is difficult to get over the inference that no other answer could be given to those who knew the facts.[6] It is true, indeed, that Jerome elsewhere uses the phrase "*servilis nequitia*" of Palladius,[7] and says of his friend Hylas, who had been a servant of Melania, that "he had washed away by the purity of his morals the stain of slavery." I see nothing in these remarks to render it improbable that the father and mother of Jerome belonged to the class of wealthy freedmen, and this may account for Jerome's comparative silence about his earlier years. In the first book of his answer to Rufinus he tells us that he remembers how he ran in and out of the little cells of slaves at play when he should have been at work.[8] It has been gratuitously assumed that these slaves belonged to his father. It is just as probable that they belonged to his wealthy foster-brother Bonosus, and I think it probable that Eusebius and his wife may have been emancipated members of that "*familia*."

[1] *Ep.* xxii. 30: "Bibliotheca, quam mihi Romam summo studio ac labore confeceram, carere omnino non poteram." He says in one place that he had emptied his purse in buying the works of Origen.

[2] *Ep.* xxii. 30: "Consuetudine *lautioris cibi*."

[3] "Parentum . . . census" (*Ep.* lxvi. 14).

[4] *Ep.* lxvi. 14.

[5] *Ep.* lxxxii. 2: "E servo clericum factum criminatur."

[6] Zöckler ingeniously conjectures that Paulinianus had been taken captive by the Goths in the total sack of Stridon in A.D. 377 (comp. *Ep.* cxxiii. 17), when he was a child of eight years old. But surely this would not have branded him with the name of "slave."

[7] Proem. *Dial. c. Pelagianos.*

[8] *Inv. c. Rufin.* i. 30.

The household consisted of Eusebius and his wife, Jerome, and a sister. The second son, Paulinianus was born twenty years after Jerome.[1] His mother had a sister named Castorina, between whom and her nephew there was a deep estrangement which he tried to remove by an appeal to the duty of Christian charity.[2] The relations of the members of this little household to one another do not seem to have been happy. Paulinianus indeed attached himself to his brother, and lived with him at Bethlehem for many years. The only sister, whose name is not mentioned, fell into some serious sin, of which Jerome speaks as a wound inflicted by the devil, and which rendered him deeply solicitous about her.[3] She had, however, been "recalled from death to life" by Julian, a deacon of Aquileia,[4] while she was still in early youth; and Jerome commends her to the special care of the Bishop Valerian, and of his friends Chromatius, Eusebius, and Jovinus, who with their mother [4] and sisters were living an ascetic life.[5]

The little Jerome, like so many other eminent men, had a very severe schoolmaster, to whom he gives the name of Orbilius. To the wrathful tuition of this pedagogue the young truant had sometimes to be dragged back by force from the bosom of his indulgent grandmother.[6] It is clear, however, that Jerome must have profited greatly from the training of his childish years. He early began to lay up the stores of classical knowledge of which he made such excellent use in later times. Among his first reminiscences he mentions a terrible earthquake, which caused an incursion of the sea, and threw down the walls of Areopolis. He also alludes to the anecdote of an event which he says had occurred in his "infancy" at Alexandria.[7] When the hermit Antony came to Alexandria at the invitation of Athanasius to help in confuting the Arians, he received a visit from Didymus the Blind, and after admiring his genius and knowledge of the Scriptures, asked him "whether he felt sad because of his blindness?" Didymus remained silent; but on

[1] Paulinianus was thirty when he was ordained at Bethlehem by Epiphanius in 399. *Ep.* lxxxii. 8.

[2] *Ep.* xiii. A.D. 374, I follow Vallarsi's dates.

[3] *Ep.* vi. 4: "Huic ego . . . omnia etiam tuta timeo."

[4] *Ep.* vi. [5] *Ep.* vii. 4.

[6] *Apol. c. Ruf.* i. 30: "Et ad Orbilium saevientem de aviae sinu tractum esse captivum."

[7] A.D. 355, when Jerome was about ten years old. *Ep.* lxviii. 2.

being pressed he admitted that it was a heavy trial. "Strange!" said the hermit, "that you should grieve at the loss of a gift which flies and ants possess, and not rather rejoice in possessing a knowledge which only saints and Apostles have deserved!" The anecdote is probably apocryphal.

After learning all that the local "Orbilius" could teach him the youth was sent to complete his education at Rome. The course of study, according to the fashion of that day, was mainly grammatical and rhetorical. He studied the Latin classics under the guidance of the celebrated Donatus,[1] whose *Ars Grammatica*, in three books, was the torment of schoolboys down to the days of Corderius and the Reformation, and whose name passed into the substantive "donat," which means a lesson of any kind.[2] He was constantly engaged on declamations upon all sorts of subjects in the schools of eloquence, and frequented the law courts to hear the great forensic orators.[3] He also studied logic.[4] So far his education corresponded to the old *Trivium*,

"*Gram.* loquitur, *Dia.* vera, docet, *Rhet.* verba colorat."

Besides this he went through an eclectic course of philosophy, including works of Plato, Diogenes, Clitomachus, Carneades, Posidonius, the commentaries of Alexander Aphrodisiensis, and the *Isagoge* of Porphyry.[5] Here, too, he began to collect the library which was the chief delight and solace of his life. He copied out many books with his own hand.[6]

It is evident that during this period of his education at Rome two counter forces were struggling in his mind—the temptations to sensuality which he encountered in the unholy city, and the influences of religion which he had derived from his early training.

It was the unfortunate custom of that day to postpone baptism, partly from a belief in its magical efficacy to insure the for-

[1] *C. Ruf.* i. 16; *in Eccles. i.* p. 390.

[2] Bishop Pecock called one of his books "The Donat into the Christian Religion."

[3] *Comm. in Gal. ii.* 13; *c. Pelagianos*, i. 2.

[4] He mentions the "septem modos conclusionum," the sorites, and sophistic tricks like the *Pseudomenos*, etc. (*c. Ruf.* i. 30). In *Ep.* cxix. 1, he speaks slightingly of rhetoric as "*canina facundia.*"

[5] *Epp.* lx. 5, l. 1. It seems clear that he must have learnt Greek young, in spite of what Rufinus says, *Invect.* ii. p. 365: "Ante . . . quam converteretur . . . literas Graecas et linguam *penitus ignorabat.*"

[6] *Epp.* xxii. 30, v. 2.

giveness of prae-baptismal sins, partly from the notion that it involved obligations of which many in their earlier years believed themselves incapable. The provincial student was a youth of passions so ardent that even in mature age they had not been wholly subdued by enfeebled health, and had been only increased by the morbid reactions from extreme asceticism. In the freedom of his Epistles he tells us, as frankly as Augustine, that during what we should call his University course at Rome he fell into grievous temptation. Nor are his confessions only general, as when he writes that Rufinus, who had been recently baptized, is "pure as driven snow," while he himself, stained with all the foulness of sin, is awaiting day and night the paying of the last farthing.[1] He does not conceal the fact that at Rome he lived an impure life "during the slippery journey of his youth."[2] When he urges upon Heliodorus the beauty of a virginal soul, he confesses that he himself had suffered loss and shipwreck in the Charybdis of luxury and the Scylla of lust.[3] He admits to Pammachius that the only virginity which he can try to preserve is that which is subsequent to the second birth of baptism.[4] He tells Pope Damasus that Isaiah, who had sinned in speech only, had need to speak of "unclean lips," but that he has sinned in eye, and foot, and hand, and all his members, and deserves a second baptism of fire, because he has defiled his baptismal robe.[5] When he was a hermit in the desert of Chalcis he groans over the polluted heart which he had carried away from these Roman orgies of his youth.

Yet all the while the Spirit of God was struggling within him. He never forgot the lessons of his Christian childhood nor forsook the assemblies of Christian worship. When the Sunday brought some relaxation of the dreary round of grammar, logic, and declamation, he used to wander about Rome with Pammachius and other friends of his own age, to visit the tombs of the Apostles and Martyrs. To find the latter he had to descend into the darkness of the Catacombs, which he compares to going down alive into the pit.[6] Even in these early years Jerome had caught the spirit of his age. He regarded the martyrs with a feeling akin to positive worship; cherished relics with a devotion which stirred the contempt of the Pagans; and identified spiritual perfection with an ascetic discipline of the utmost severity.

[1] *Ep.* iv. 2. [2] *Ep.* vii. 4. [3] *Ep.* xiv. 6.
[4] *Ep.* xlviii. 20. [5] *Ep.* xviii. 11. [6] *In Ezech.* xl.

Jerome witnessed the brief revival of Paganism under the Emperor Julian. At Rome he had seen the altars of heathen deities smoking with the blood of victims. The news of the early death of Julian in the midst of peril and disaster came like a thunderbolt alike to Pagans and Christians. The stories that his last words were "*Vicisti Galilaee!*" or, "O Sun! thou hast deceived me!"[1] or "Be satisfied!" have no authority. All that is certain is told us by Ammianus Marcellinus, who was an eye-witness of the scene.[2] Nevertheless the current belief among Christians that he in some way or other cursed his gods, and confessed his failure, corresponds with the impression made by his death even upon the supporters of his Pagan reaction. Jerome tells us that when Rome was startled by the news that the persecuting Emperor was slain, a Gentile met him, and asked "how the Christians could possibly speak of Christ as a gentle and forgiving God, when nothing was more clear than the swiftness and severity of the vengeance which he inflicted upon his enemies?"[3]

Jerome has not given us the story of his conversion, as Augustine has given his. We do not therefore know whether his decision to live a pure and faithful life was taken suddenly or not. The date of his baptism is uncertain, but probably he was baptized by Pope Liberius or one of his clergy when he was about the age of twenty, and before he had completed his Roman education.

The movements of Jerome when he left Rome are nowhere recorded. Possibly he returned for a short time to Stridon and Aquileia, and then started for a long tour in Gaul, where he visited all the chief cities, and stayed for some time at Trèves.[4] There he copied out the book of St. Hilary *On Synods* for his friend Rufinus, and found it excessively prolix. He also copied Hilary's *Commentary on the Psalms*. Bonosus was his companion in this journey, and they had everything in common. On "the semi-barbarous banks of the Rhine," he tells us, he first "began to wish to serve God."[5] By this he does not mean that he there

[1] Sozom. *H. E.* vi. 2; Zonaras, xiii. 13; Philostorgius (vii. 15) says that he exclaimed Κορέσθητι!

[2] Amm. Marc. xxv. 3. All the historians except Marcellinus say that on receiving his fatal wound he looked up to heaven and fell fainting with a great cry.

[3] *In Abac.* i. 10.

[4] *Epp.* iii. 5, v. 2 (cxxiii. 16).

[5] *Ep.* iii. 5: "Post Romana studia . . . ut ego primus coeperim velle Te colere."

felt the first stirrings of the Spirit of Grace within him, but that he began to form his resolution of becoming "a religious" in the medieval sense of the word, by withdrawing himself from the world and taking a vow of celibacy and poverty. To "serve God" in Jerome's sense meant to become a monk, and "servants of God" had already been specialised into this significance in religious circles.

By this time his bent towards Scriptural studies was fully formed, and it was while he was still a young man that he wrote the *Commentary on Obadiah*, of which he was afterwards ashamed. "I interpreted Obadiah allegorically," he says, "because I was ignorant of the historic sense." [1]

Wherever he travelled he looked on all things with an observant eye, and in later years he was always ready with his reminiscences. In one place he mentions that he had seen the brutal cannibalism of the British Atticotians; in another he tells us that the Galatians spoke the same vernacular as the people of Trèves." [2]

[1] *Praef. Comm. in Abd.* (Vall. vi. 360).
[2] *C. Jovin.* ii. 7; *Praef. l.* ii. *Comm. in Galat.*

XVI

Continued

MONASTICISM AND ASCETICISM

"They who from wilful disesteem of life
Affront the eye of solitude, shall find
That her mild nature can be terrible."

WORDSWORTH.

SECTION II

THE minds of thousands of Christians in the fourth and fifth centuries were filled with monastic fervour. Almost every great Father and historian of this period eulogises the retired, the celibate, the ascetic life. Basil's life received a new impulse from his visits to the cells of Eastern solitaries. Rufinus wrote a history of the hermits.[1] Palladius visited them, and wrote of them with enthusiasm in his *Historia Lausiaca.* Theodoret composed biographies of thirty monks and ascetics in his *Historia Religiosa.* Sulpicius Severus in his three dialogues gave an account of the monks of Egypt and of St. Martin of Tours. Cassian drew up his *Conversations* and *Institutions.*[2] The *Life of St. Antony,* attributed to the great Athanasius, had exercised a profound influence over the imagination of multitudes. The great Cappadocian Fathers, and Chrysostom and Isidore of Pelusium, caught the same enthusiasm. The Greek ecclesiastical historians, Socrates and Sozomen, naturally consider the subject at some length and with most favourable bias.[3] The writings of Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome abound in praises of solitude

[1] *Historia Eremetica.*

[2] *Institutiones coenobiales* and *Collationes Patrum.*

[3] Sozomen, i. 12; Socrates, iv. 23. See Bingham, *Christian Antiquities,* Bk. vii.

and vows. I must here speak of some of the aspects of monastic asceticism, because no one was more influential than Jerome in disseminating the opinions which caused its immense development.

The ascetic tendency is found very early in the history of all religions. Even Hottentots, negroes, and North American Indians practise voluntary fasting with a view to the propitiation of offended deities. The companions of Alexander found hermits and ascetics in the Indian gymnosophists.[1] Monachism attained large proportions among the Buddhists, anchoretism among the Brahmins. The jogis and fakirs of Hindostan far exceeded the most self-tormenting of the medieval saints in the ingenuity and intensity of the self-degrading tortures to which they submitted their miserable lives. The bonzes of China and the lamas of Thibet held much the same views as the monks about the virtue of self-inflicted agonies. The fine sense of the Greeks saved them from grosser and more revolting forms of fanaticism, but a spare diet was among the chief means adopted by Pythagoreans, Stoics, and Cynics, for the acquisition of a complete and tranquil empire over their lower passions. Judaism had its Nazarites, its Essenes, its Therapeutae; Mohammedanism still glories in its howling dervishes and its solitary saints.

The causes which led to asceticism were manifold; but the deepest cause which, heretical as it is, exercised a strong though half-unconscious influence over many Christians in the early centuries was the Zoroastrian, Dualistic, Manichean, and Gnostic conception of the inherent corruption and malignity of matter. The body, which the gift of the Indwelling Spirit has elevated into a temple of the Holy Ghost, was regarded as a polluting tomb.[2] It was treated as the source of all evils; and because it is a duty to subdue the appetites of the flesh, it was most erroneously regarded as meritorious to crush the body in which they originate. In Egypt, the dreamy home of insatiable curiosity, in Alexandria, the seething hotbed of conflicting theories, Christianity became deeply tainted with errors, which flowed from the impure streams of Eastern speculation. In vain had St. Paul—alike in the Epistle to the Colossians and

[1] Arrian, *Exped.* vii. 1-3; Pliny, *H. N.* vii. 2; Plut. *Alexander*, ch. 64; Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, xiv. 17, xv. 20; Porphyry, *De Abstinent.* iv. 17.

[2] The identification of σῶμα, "body," and σῆμα, "tomb," was a favourite one.

in the Pastoral Epistles—given the strongest warnings against external, mechanical, artificial rules for securing that spiritual victory which could only be won by union with the risen Christ.[1] In vain had he argued that it was an apostasy from Christian freedom to be overridden by petty and anxious ordinances about food and drink and external things—rules derived, not from God or from the Gospel, but from Gnosticism and the Talmud. We may well wonder how any one can read the teaching of Christ and the Apostles and yet consider that organisation, or ceremonialism, or monastic celibacy, or needless self-torture have anything to do with the perfectness of the spiritual life; yet so it was. In vain had the great Apostle insisted on the sacredness of marriage, even on the validity, and, in many cases, the desirability of second marriages. In vain had he laid down the principle that to the pure all things are pure. In vain had Christ himself lived the common life of men, eating and drinking, joining in the marriage festival, going to the banquets alike of the publican and Pharisee, braving the empty taunt of the formalists who called Him a glutton and a wine-bibber. In vain had He poured contempt on timorous observances and petty ritual, treating with indifference the morbid scrupulosity of minute ceremonies, endless services, frequent fastings, incessant ablutions, and repetitive prayers. In vain had He taught Peter, by that memorable vision at Joppa, that he was not to call common the things which God had cleansed, and in vain had He uttered the parable about inward defilement and the undefiling character of food—making all meats clean. The Bible contains a literature so wide and diverse that it is never difficult either to choose counter-texts to those which forbid the distinctions between clear duties and imaginary works of supererogation, or to defend, by exorbitant inferences, the views which spring from the eternal Pharisaism of the human heart. The modes of life which kindled the enthusiastic admiration of Jerome and the multitudes whom he has in-

[1] Col. ii. 20-23: "If ye died with Christ, from the rudiments of the world (*i.e.* rudimentary ordinances about matters of sense) why are ye overridden with ordinances—'Touch not,' 'Taste not,' 'Handle not' (which things are destined for corruption in the consuming) according to the commandments and teaching of men? which sort of things, having a reputation for wisdom in self-imposed service, and abjectness, and hard treatment of the body, are not of any real value to remedy indulgence of the flesh." See Bishop Lightfoot, *ad loc.* Comp. Matt. xv. 1-20; Mark vii. 1-23; Gal. iv. 3-9, v. 1; 1 Tim. iv. 3.

fluenced, owe their origin to Oriental theosophy and were supported by perversions of the sacred text. The very passage in which St. Paul had specially warned the early converts that ostentatious humility and body-torturing rigour were of no value for the remedy of carnal desires was hopelessly misunderstood. Even such influential Fathers as Hilary and Ambrose, blinded perhaps by the erroneous tendencies of their day, actually enforce as Christian duties the "Touch not, taste not, handle not," which the Apostle is denouncing as a vain semblance of wisdom, resting only on the doctrines and commandments of men![1]

It is true that these views derived their strength, not from their erroneous elements, but from the truths with which they were inextricably entangled. Alienation from all personal hopes and interests, and the entire abandonment of earthly goods, never have been the duty of all men, but only of those who have been specially called by the voice of God to face such conditions for the good of the world. The Gospels themselves abundantly show that the command, "Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor," was a special test proposed to one ambitious and self-deceiving youth, and not, as it was often represented to be, a direction to all Christians. The abandonment of marriage might become a positive duty to the wandering missionary, or to the Evangelist who had been consecrated to a life which, in ages of peril and persecution, could only be effective when it was emancipated from all encumbrances. But it was a deep mistake to maintain that celibacy is in any sense superior in inherent sanctity to honourable marriage. The exaltation of virginity as a thing intrinsically precious to God, and deserving of a pre-eminent reward, was an instance of the "will-worship"[2] which followed the aberrations of heathenism and heresy by making idols of human traditions.

When the legendary Antony retired into the desert, as though it were hopeless to live in a doomed world, and as though it were as much the duty of the Christian to flee from "the world"—even from the Christian world—as it was Lot's duty to flee from Sodom, he was misled by giving an erroneous universality to commands which our Lord's own teaching and example prove

[1] Fortunately Tertullian (*adv. Marc.* v. 19), Jerome (*ad loc.*), Augustine (*Ep.* cxix.) had given the true explanation. See Bishop Lightfoot's invaluable notes on this remarkable passage.

[2] ἐθελοθρησκεία.

to have been exceptional. Self-sacrifice is indeed so fruitful, and so contrary to the ordinary impulses of human nature, that, in that dreadful epoch of crime and confusion, the better side of the example of the hermits taught a needful lesson. It taught the world the infinite value of the individual soul. But the errors on which the whole theory was based produced a crop of terrible evils. Nature avenged herself on those who violated her laws. The indolence of morbid speculation; the perpetual sickness of self-introspection, undisturbed by the paltry industry of weaving palm-leaves into baskets; the glorification of dirt; the confusion of sanctity with abhorrent self-mortifications; the daring disruption of natural and sacred ties; the violation of the innocent laws of human intercourse; the expansion of selfishness to infinitude,—these were prolific of disastrous consequences. God branded the ambitious attempt with sterility and failure. Men who aimed at making their life better than that which Christ had taught, or the Apostles practised, sank into a condition which was often worse than that of the beasts which perish. A short experience showed the best monks that though men might fly from their fellow-men, they could not fly from themselves.[1] The self-degraded body reacted on the enfeebled mind.[2] No faith became too revolting, no maceration too frightful, no contradiction of the natural affections too violently extreme. It is impossible to read without pity and horror of the foul condition to which the stylites and grazing monks reduced the image of God, as though Christ were to be pleased by the wildest exaggerations of the Phariseeism which He so burningly denounced, or as though a humble walk with God were to be attained by the Nebuchadnezzar-curse of a self-inflicted lycanthropy. The impulse which filled the deserts of Egypt with anchorites and monks and nuns became in time an unmixed evil. The motives which led to it were not only mistaken, but even in many cases cowardly and insincere. The times were terrible; the struggle for life was intense; taxation

[1] See the *Confessions* of Basil, *Ep.* 2 of Jerome, *Ep.* 18 of Nilus, *Ep.* 95 (*ad Rusticum*), *Epp.* lib. ii. 140. Philo has already gone through a similar experience, and says *οὐδὲν ὄνησα*. *Leg. alleg.* iii. 1102.

[2] No epithet but *loathly* can be applied to such stories as those told us about Simeon the Stylite (Theodoret, *Hist. Rel.* 26); the younger Macarius (Palladius, *Hist. Lausiaca*, 20); the *βοσκοί* who received the special eulogy of Ephraem Syrus (cf. Sozomen, *H. E.* vi. 33); Akepsismas of Cyprus (Theodoret, *H. R.*); and others (Sulp. Sev. *Dial.* i. 11).

almost insupportably heavy. The perpetual dread of barbarian incursions made property insecure and family life an incessant source of anxiety. It seemed an easier thing to fly from the world than to face its perils and miseries. Dreamy idleness, and the pride of fancied superiority, and the admiration of men had their attractiveness to many. Why should not they too work miracles, as they were told that Nilus and Hilarion had done? Why should not mourning lions scratch graves for them, as Jerome said they had done for the hermit Paul? It was one of the evils of desert monasticism that it filled the pure atmosphere of Christianity with a miasma of gross superstition, which was fed with a crop of lying legends. It diverted the true energies of Christianity from its natural and social mission. It darkened the lives and consciences of millions who, living in the world, were taught to believe that they were only aiming at an inferior sanctity, and would only receive a second-rate or dubious reward. It altered the perspective and centre of gravity of the Christian life. Macarius prayed a hundred times a day; Paul the Simple three hundred times, which he counted by pebbles; and he was greatly distressed to hear of a virgin who prayed seven hundred times a day. A spectator once saw Simeon Stylites make twelve hundred and forty-four genuflexions—and then stopped counting. So far as the conception of goodness was purely quantitative, it may be that the Publican who offers up from the heart his one brief cry may go down to his house justified rather than the others.[1]

The large part played by Jerome in fostering the notions which led to ascetic monachism rendered it necessary to touch upon the subject. We shall see hereafter that his arguments are untenable, and that much of his influence was exercised for unwise ends. It will be sufficient here to show that the Reformed Churches of later times have been wisely guided in rejecting the manifold corruptions of the fourth century, together with the false principles on which they were founded.

Mistaken views of duty and a mistaken estimate of sin were an intolerable and needless burden to the individual, and in many instances tended to hinder rather than promote the spiritual life. Taking Cassian as an enthusiastic exponent of the glories of monachism, we cannot share the exultation with which he tells

[1] These errors culminated in the heresy of the Euchites or Messalians about 360.

his stories of monks and their obedience. He tells us how, at the command of his superior, the Abbot John while yet a novice spent day after day for a whole year in fetching water from long distances, in all weathers, to water an old rotten log of wood. To us it seems that an aged abbot might have given a less absurd injunction, and a religious youth have better employed his time. We see nothing to admire but everything to reprobate in the infliction of severe reprimand and public penance for the sin of having accidentally dropped three grains of pulse. The story of Mucius, whose little son of eight years old was purposely left dirty and neglected by his brother monks that the father might be disgusted with him, and who was constantly beaten by them for nothing that he might always be in tears, is to us inexpressibly revolting; and the triumphant climax of the story that Mucius, at the abbot's command, flung the child into a river, only shows how intolerably Pagan and unnatural was the condition of mind which could regard as holy such violations of all Divine and human laws.[1]

The experience of thousands of monks confirmed the wisdom of St. Paul's warnings against false methods of attaining to saintly purity. Serapion, in the fifth of Cassian's collations, shows that of the eight principal vices which infest the human race—gluttony, uncleanness, avarice, anger, melancholy, despair, vainglory, and pride—not one lost any of its power among the desert solitaries. Melancholy and despair above all—so Serapion tells us—unprovoked by any assignable cause, are known to vex the dwellers in the desert frequently and with the utmost bitterness;[2] and he adds that any one who lives in solitude, and experiences the struggles of the inward war, soon discovers this for himself. This anxiety of heart, which they call by the Greek name *acedia*, was considered by the poor hermits to be the "demon that walketh in the noonday" of David's psalm. It made them callous and apathetic, filling them with contempt for their brethren, horror of their abode, disgust for their cell.[3] It paralysed their souls with despair about themselves, their duty, their choice of life. It is the dreadful reaction of a nature occupied with alternate self-conceit and self-disgust, resulting from conditions which God never intended for our human life. "The depths of forests, the summits of hills," says Ivo de Chartres,

[1] Cassian, *De Instit. Monachi*, iv. 20-31. [2] Id. *Collat.* v. 9.
[3] Cassian, *De Instit. Monachi*, x.

"make not a man blessed, if he have not with him a solitude of the mind, a Sabbath of the heart, a calm of conscience, and inward aspirations. Without these all solitude is attended by listless despair, vainglory, and perilous storms of temptations."[1] Antony himself (so his legend tells us) used to quote the verse, "Woe unto him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up."[2]

We are not surprised to learn that conditions so unnatural frequently produced shipwreck of mind as well as of body. Avarice, which men had thought to conquer by the sacrifice of all their earthly possessions, sometimes reasserted itself in extravagant selfishness about a knife or a pen, the mere touching of which by another caused an outbreak of violent anger. Extravagant self-mortification sometimes reacted with fierce rebound into profligate self-indulgence. Artificial humility developed into fanatical pride.[3]

The weakened brains of the hermits were disturbed by visitations of hellish monsters, and their sleepless nights affrighted by hideous sights and sounds. Not unfrequently, like the unhappy Stagirus—the friend of Chrysostom—they found that the desertion of the wholesome common life of men only ended in a state which they regarded as demoniacal possession.[4] They often imagined that they worked prodigious miracles. Jerome tells Rusticus that damp cells, immoderate fasting, over-reading, and weary solitude turned some of them into hypochondriacs, and made them fit subjects rather for the servants of Hippocrates than the teachers of monachism.[5] He tells Demetrias that he has known both monks and nuns who had gone mad from extravagant asceticism, so that they no longer knew what to do or whither to go, what they ought to say or what to leave unsaid. We find from some curious stories in Cassian that monks and hermits sometimes committed the most terrible crimes, which, under the influence of demonic delusion, they took for heroic acts of virtue.[6] Nilus and Pachomius—unexceptionable because

[1] *Ep.* 192, quoted by Montalembert, *Monks of the West.* [2] Eccles. iv. 10.

[3] We can have no more unsuspected testimony on these subjects than that in the chapters of Cassian in the temptations of ascetics to impurity, avarice, gloom, acedia, kenodoxia, etc., in his *De capitalibus Vitiis* and his *Collationes.* Nilus too (*l. c.*) speaks of the ἀπροσεξία and ἀδιακρισία of the mind in solitude.

[4] Chrys. ad Stag a daemone vexatum, *Opp.* i. 153; Jer. *Vit. Malachi*, 5.

[5] *Ep.* cxxv. 16.

[6] Cassian, *Collat.* ii. 5-8. See Gieseler, I. ii. 352; Burton, *Anat. of Melancholy*, ii. 510.

favourable witnesses—testify that many monks ended their career in lunacy and suicide,[1] which took the form of ripping themselves open, and hurling themselves over precipitous rocks or into wells. Ambrose says that many drowned themselves,[2] and Gregory of Nazianzus speaks also of deaths by hanging.[3] Heathens even gave to Christians the taunting name of *Biothanatoi* or self-murderers.

But the saddest fact of all is that even those monks and solitaries who were sincere increased instead of diminishing the moral difficulties which they sought to avoid. The effects of the compulsory celibacy of the clergy have been proved to be in countless instances disastrous, by a volume of testimony of which every item may be derived, not from Reformers or Latitudinarians, but from Popes, bishops, monks, and canonised saints of the early and mediaeval Church. From the first it led to the gross scandals connected with the spiritual sisters (*agapetae*, ἀδελφαὶ σύζυγοι, συνεισακταί, *subintroductae*), against which so many Fathers gave their warning,[4] and so many canons of councils were passed in vain.[5] It is not now my painful task to show what horrors resulted from these unsanctioned ordinances, or by what steps an ambitious error became a tyrannous tradition. But it is clear that in two ways the ascetics endangered the purity which they so highly eulogised—namely, by bodily disorder and by mental absorption in the conceptions which should most have been avoided. "If you rumple the jerkin you rumple the jerkin's lining." A weakened system is less able to resist assault, and especially if the unstrung mind is morbidly sensitive to every sensual impression. The biographies of monks and hermits show decisively that their temptations to sloth, pride, and impurity were sorer and more continuous than

[1] Nilus, *Ep.* 140; Pachom. *Vit.* 61. Καὶ πολλοὶ ἐθανάτωσαν ἑαυτούς, ὁ μὲν ἐπάνωθεν πέτρας ῥιψας ἑαυτὸν ὡς ἐκστατικός, καὶ ἄλλος μαχαίρᾳ ἀπέπτυξεν τὴν κοιλίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἄλλοι ἄλλως.

[2] *De Virginibus ad Marcellinam*, iii.

[3] *Carm.* xlvii. 100 *sqq.* For these and other passages, see Zöckler, *Krit. Gesch. der Askese*, p. 220 (Frankf. 1863). The name βιοθάνατοι is a late corruption of βιαιοθάνατοι. See Ducange s. v.

[4] The mischief began among Valentinians and Encratites, Iren. *Haer.* I. i. 12; Epiphan. *Haer.* 67; but it soon became virulent among Catholics also. Tertull. *De jejun.* 17; Cyprian, *Ep.* 2; Euseb. *H. E.* vii. 2, 30; "*Agapetarum pestis*," Jer. *Ep.* xxii. 14.

[5] *E.g.* in the Councils of Eliberis, Ancyra, Nice, Tours, etc. See Zöckler, *Gesch. d. Ascese*, p. 232.

those which ever occur amid the beneficent and well-regulated activities of a Christian life, lived in accordance with Christ's example and God's demands.

Can there be any clearer proof of these views than the strange confessions of Jerome himself in his letter to Eustochium on the preservation of virginity?[1] "Oh, how often," he exclaims, "set in the desert, and in that vast solitude which, burnt by the fierce rays of the sun, afforded to monks a horrid dwelling-place, did I think that I was in the midst of the delights of Rome! I was sitting alone because I was filled with bitterness. My unsightly limbs were rough with sackcloth, and my squalid skin had grown dark as an Aethiop's flesh. Tears day by day, groans day by day, and if ever sleep had overcome me in spite of my efforts my bare loose skeleton fell to the ground with a clash. I say nothing of food and drink, since even invalid monks use only cold water, and it is luxury to taste anything warmed. I then, who, from fear of hell, had condemned myself to such a prison, a comrade only of scorpions and wild beasts, was in imagination among dances of girls. My face was pale with fasting, yet my mind was heaving with desires in my frigid body, and before a man already prematurely dead in the flesh, the fires of concupiscence alone were bursting forth. And so, deprived of all aid, I used to lie at Jesus' feet, watered them with my tears, wiped them with my hair, and subdued my resisting flesh with a seven days' fast. I do not blush to confess the wretchedness of my misery. Nay, rather I lament that I am not what I was. I remember that I frequently spent the day and the night in cries, and never ceased from beating my breast till, at God's bidding, tranquillity returned. I used to dread even my own cell, as though it were conscious of my thoughts. Angry and severe with myself, I penetrated the deserts alone. Wherever I observed the depths of valleys, the steeps of mountains, the precipices of rocks, there was my oratory, there the slave-prison of my most wretched flesh. And as God himself is my witness, after many tears, after a long gaze upon the sky, I sometimes seemed to be among the choirs of angels, and sang blithe and joyful, 'We will run after thee for the savour of thy perfumes.'" Remedies at once so intense and so ineffectual would have been rendered needless by a sounder wisdom, and a humbler observance of the will of God.

[1] *Ep.* xxii. 7.

Nor was impurity the only temptation which assailed the devotees of asceticism, and by which even the most stringent of them were fatally defeated. No less an authority than Cardinal Newman has described the frequent results of the fasting with which he has long been familiar. "Such mortifications," he says, "have at the time very various effects on different persons, and are to be observed not from their visible benefits, but from faith in the word of God. Some men are subdued by fasting; but others find it, however slight, scarcely more than an occasion of temptation. It often makes a man irritable and ill-tempered. What often follows from it is a feebleness which deprives him of his command over his bodily acts, feelings, and expressions. It makes him seem to be out of temper when he is not; I mean because his tongue, his lips, nay his brain, are not in his power. He does not use the words he wishes to use, nor the accent, nor the tone. He seems sharp when he is not. Again, weakness of body may deprive him of self-command in other ways; perhaps he cannot help smiling or laughing when he ought to be serious; or when thoughts present themselves his mind cannot throw them off, any more than if it were some dead thing; but they make an impression on him which he is not able to resist. Or again, weakness of body often hinders him from fixing his mind on his prayers, instead of making him pray more fervently; or again, weakness of body is often attended with languor and listlessness, and strongly tempts a man to sloth. Yet I have not mentioned the effects which may follow from even the moderate exercise. . . . It is undeniably a means of temptation," and may expose Christians to thoughts "from which they would turn with abhorrence and horror."

It is true that in spite of these sad and grave admissions Dr. Newman still thinks that fasting is enjoined on Christians as a duty, and that, therefore, it may be a source of supernatural grace. But here, surely, is the mistake.

If such be the results of fasting, we can hardly wonder if we find on examination that while abstinence and self-denial are constantly enjoined, lengthened and severe fasts are never enjoined in the New Testament; and that some, at least, of the passages in which fasting is referred to are interpolations due to the ascetic bias of early scribes.[1]

[1] The substantive "fasting" (νηστεία) occurs but six times in the New Testament, exclusive of 1 Cor. vii. 6, 2 Cor. vi. 5, where it probably refers to spells of

Before leaving the subject I may refer to a beautiful legend of Antony, of which there is a duplicate in the life of the elder Macarius. To check the temptation to spiritual pride, he was told in vision that after all his self-denials he had not attained to the holiness of a certain poor cobbler in Alexandria. Vexed and astonished, the hermit made his way to the city, and asking the cobbler the secret of his holiness, was told in reply that, on the contrary, he regarded himself as the worst sinner in Alexandria, and was constantly lamenting to God that all other men were better than himself. In the story of Macarius the vision reveals to him that two poor women surpassed him in God's approval. Seeking them out, he finds that they are two poor married washerwomen, who knew of no other merit than that of doing their work and living faithfully with their husbands, but who had bound themselves by a vow never to speak evil of any one. It is refreshing to come on such anecdotes in the midst of childish miracles, grim demonologies, and revolting details. They show that, after all, the greatest of the hermits had learnt for themselves that there was another and a better way of serving God than that of which they had set the example, and that the rewards of simple humility and unnoticed love might be greater and better than those of self-absorbed and unwarranted devotion.

But if the ascetic life was injurious to many, and fatal to some, it also produced very mixed results upon society, and it must be feared that the evils it produced outweighed its benefits. Augustine admits that if some of the monks and nuns whom he had known were the best persons in the world, others were the worst. Let it be freely allowed that many holy souls embraced the "religious" life, and that by virtue of their holiness they conferred conspicuous blessings on the world, and consecrated to the cause of God a splendid enthusiasm which won many

involuntary hunger. In three of these passages it is of uncertain genuineness; in two more it alludes only to Jewish customs. In one alone does it refer to a special Christian fast on a special occasion (Acts xiv. 23, comp. xiii. 3). Apart from the two passages in the Corinthians, fasting is not once mentioned in all the Epistles. Apart from the temptation in the wilderness, it is only alluded to in one incident of the Gospels (Matt. ix. 14, 15; Mark ii. 18, 20; Luke v. 33, 35); and there the Fathers rightly saw that "the days when *the bridegroom shall be taken from them*" can only be applied to the Christian dispensation by a complete error of exegesis. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. vi. 16, 18) our Lord is primarily alluding to the Jewish custom of His own day. The fact that the Pharisees and disciples of John fasted, while His disciples fasted not, is alone sufficient to prove that fasting was not meant to be permanent or excessive. "I fast twice in the week" was only the boast of the reprehended Pharisee.

victories over the forces of evil. The monasteries sent forth great missionaries; they trained great bishops; they produced noble hymns and spiritual books of devotion; they had their share in the conversion and remoulding of the barbarian conquerors of the Empire; they kept alive the flickering lamps of learning, of literature, and of art. On the other hand, they were responsible for the prevalence of many errors and of much torpid ignorance. Many of even the better monks were misled by Manichean principles. They spoke and acted as though matter were inherently evil and marriage intrinsically polluting.[1] They reduced religion to the concentrated selfishness of mere individualism, which, in their conduct towards others, often degenerated into a morose pride. "Fanatical self-torture was the natural parent of sanguinary ferocity." Many were led by remorse and terror and disgust to assume the monastic life who had no vocation for it, and who were deteriorated by it; many others entered it as a cloak for impure license, base greed, exemption from public burdens, and the enjoyment of admiration for their "philosophy." The history of the fourth and fifth centuries abounds in events in which monks took a pernicious and dishonourable part. "There arose in each diocese," says De Broglie, "real powers, with no other claim than a reputation for sanctity, but which none the less put forth pretensions to rule the faithful, and braved bishops as well as magistrates. At the smallest incident which piqued their curiosity these false saints left their cells, ill closed against the noises of the world, to come and dogmatise at the gate of councils, and to harangue the crowd in public places, always showing themselves inclined to confound intrigue with zeal and fanaticism with courage." Grossly ignorant, hopelessly superstitious, brutally fanatical, the monks of Egypt became as a body the vilest instruments of the worst character in ecclesiastical history, the Patriarch Theophilus of Alexandria. The infamies of the Council of Robbers were chiefly due to the turbulent opinionativeness of these outrageous incendiaries. Monks murdered Hypatia, and lent the chief support to the ambitious terrorism of Cyril. Monks worried and vexed the episcopal life of Basil. Monks attacked the refuge of Chrysostom, troubled his sickness, and assailed his life. Their morose pride, impenetrable ignorance, and sullen

[1] The Eustathians were condemned for these views at the Council of Gangra. See *supra*, ii. 83.

bigotry made them the terror of the civil government, to which they paid no tax and rendered no services.

The stupidity of anthropomorphism found among them its almost exclusive supporters. Mariolatry, saint-worship, relic-worship, terrors of demons, dream-divinations, lying legends, invented miracles, and every form of crude superstition acquired strength from their support. The ever-increasing multitude of vagrants and bigots, whose squalid virtues were repaid by a sort of adoration, denuded the Empire of its natural defenders, and left it a prey to the barbarians. Valens was more than half right in rescinding the immunity from military service which constituted for so many the temptation to monasticism, and in sweeping thousands of these sturdy idlers from Egyptian deserts into the ranks of his army. He called them, without any circumlocution, "the followers of laziness" (*ignaviae sectatores*). Synesius speaks of them as barbarous, indolent, and brutal. Salvian shows how much the monks were hated, and the fury with which Pagans like Libanius, Eunapius, Zosimus, and Rutilius speak of them is explained if it be not excused by the scathing pictures drawn by all the greatest of the Fathers of the *Remoboth*, the *Massalians*, the *Gyrovagi*, and other classes of criminals and hypocrites who lived under the shelter of the monk's cowl. Hermits, monks, and even nuns lived in a state of revolting dirt, which they regarded as one proof of their piety. They left a most unfavourable impression on the cultivated heathen. Eunapius speaks of their "swinish life," their tyrannous self-assertion, their neglect of public decency, their filth and nakedness. The horror with which men of wisdom and refinement regarded the semi-brutal "grazing monks" and "pillar-saints" may be imagined; and those forms of fanaticism were discouraged and put down by the good sense of Western piety.[1] If even the little monasteries of Augustine and of Jerome produced scandals of the darkest dye, was it not a sign that the institution itself was in some respects unsound? And if these things were done in the green tree, what should be done in the dry?[2]

[1] The bishops of Gaul very sensibly demolished a pillar set up for this purpose by a certain Wulfilaich. Even Nilus, in 430, warns the Stylites very plainly. *Epp.* ii. 114, 115.

[2] *De Gubernat. Dei*, viii. "In monachis . . . Aforum probatur odium, quia irridebant scilicet, maledicebant, insectabuntur detestabantur, etc." Ambrose, *Ep.* xli. "Monachi multa scelera faciunt" (the complaint of a minister of Theodosius).

XVI

Continued

JEROME AT AQUILEIA; AND HIS TRAVELS

(A.D. 372-374)

"ΙΧΘΥΟΣ filius."—JER. *Ep.*

SECTION III

AT the end of his sojourn in Gaul, about the year 372, Jerome returned to Stridon. Domestic duties, the care of his patrimony, of his sister, and of his infant brother Paulinian, seem to have made it impossible for him to retire at once from the world.[1] He lived, however, mostly at Aquileia, in a little monastic society of intimate friends.

First among these friends in learning, age, and dignity was Rufinus, afterwards a monk at Jerusalem and a presbyter of Aquileia. He had been baptized before Jerome, and Jerome felt for him an admiration which he expresses in the warmest terms. Jerome was a man who never loved or hated by halves, and he lavished on his friend an ardent affection, which was perhaps deepened by the entire dissimilarity of their gifts and nature. Jerome was passionate, emotional, poetic, sarcastic, impetuous; Rufinus was hard, logical, matter-of-fact. From the warmest of friends they afterwards became, to the scandal of the Christian world, the most virulent of enemies. In his earlier letters Rufinus is everything that is most dear; Jerome cannot even estimate his virtues; he has the stamp of sainthood upon him; and Jerome—dust and ashes and mud as he is—is

[1] *Ep.* iii.

content if his weak sight can gaze on the splendour of such a character.[1] The thought of meeting him again, grasping his dear hands, kissing his cheeks, enjoying his conversation, fills Jerome with transport.[2] After the quarrel he becomes not Rufinus but Grynaeus, "the Grunter," a sort of odious, greedy, hypocritical Tartuffe. Even after he is dead in Sicily Jerome has no other epitaph for him than that "The Scorpion is laid in the earth between the rebel giants Enceladus and Porphyrius, and the hydra of many heads has at length ceased to hiss against me."[3]

Hardly less dear, and happily with an unbroken friendship, was Jerome's well-born and wealthy foster-brother, Bonosus, the companion of his Roman studies and his Gallic tour. He was a man of moderate gifts, but of so serious an enthusiasm that he was the first of the little band of friends to carry out the idea of hermit life. Jerome rapturously tells Rufinus that, despising his mother, his sister, his dearest brother, Bonosus had chosen for his solitary retreat a rocky islet shipwrecked in the sea which echoed round it, where there was not even one resident shepherd or fisherman. The earth is green with no grass, the vernal field is overshadowed by no umbrage. The steep rocks shut in the island like a prison. He—safe, fearless, armed with the Apostle's armour—speaks to God and hears His voice, and perhaps like John sees visions in his island solitude.[4] "Bonosus," he writes in another letter, "as a son of the Fish, seeks the watery waste.[5] We, foul with our former contagion, like basilisks and scorpions, seek dry places. He is already treading on the snake's head; we are still the serpent's food."[6]

Heliodorus, also a lifelong friend, had been an officer in the Roman army. Abandoning the service he became a presbyter of Aquileia, and afterwards Bishop of Altinum. He accompanied Jerome to Syria, and left him to stay with Florentius at Jerusalem. On his return to Antioch his friend tried to induce him to share with him the life of a hermit in the desert of

[1] *Epp.* iii. iv. 2. [2] *Ep.* v. 2.

[3] *Prol. Comm. in Ezech.* On Rufinus, see Fontanini, *Histor. Lit. Aquilciensis*, Rom. 1742; Mar. de Rubeis, *Dissertt. Jude*, Kenet. 1745.

[4] *Ep.* iii. 4.

[5] The Fish—ΙΧΘΥΣ—the secret Christian symbol for Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτηρ. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour. See Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, xviii. 23; Paulinus, *Ep.* 33; Tertullian, *De Bapt.* 1. See M. St. J. Tyrrwhit, s. v. Fish, in *Dict. of Christian Antiquities.* [6] *Ep.* vii. 3.

Chalcis. But Heliodorus had to take charge of a sister and nephew, and left Jerome for his pastoral and domestic duties.[1] We do not know the special meaning of Jerome's allusion when he says that his sins had driven away his friend from him.[2] To him Jerome addressed one of his most impassioned and rhetorical epistles.[3] It failed to bring about his return to "the perfect life" of the solitary, but it had an immense effect in increasing the popularity of ascetic ideas.[4] But their friendship remained unbroken, and when Nepotianus, the nephew of Heliodorus, had grown up and been ordained, Jerome told him to look up to his uncle as the model of a true presbyter.[5] Heliodorus took the deepest interest in Jerome's literary labours, especially in the Vulgate translation, and aided him by contributions which were gratefully acknowledged.[6]

To these three principal friends were joined Valerian, Bishop of Aquileia, Chromatius, who succeeded him, and his brother Eusebius, who also became a bishop. These brothers lived with their widowed mother and virgin sister, and Chromatius, who was himself a writer of some esteem, also enjoyed the friendship of Ambrose, Augustine, and Chrysostom. At a later period he strove to reconcile Jerome with Rufinus, and it was at his suggestion that the latter translated into Latin the ecclesiastical history of Eusebius and Origen's homilies on Joshua.[7] Jovinus, afterwards a bishop, the monk Chrysogonus, the deacon Nicias, Hylas the emancipated slave of Melania, and Innocentius, a layman who had the honour to be the first who aroused Jerome's literary activity, were also united in the little brotherhood. At Aquileia Jerome made the acquaintance of Paul, the aged hermit of Concordia, whose conversation deepened still further his ascetic tendencies, and from whom we derive the celebrated anecdote of Cyprian's fondness for the writings of Tertullian.[8]

At this time Jerome seems to have had the monacal feelings which led him wholly to avoid the society of women. At least

[1] *Ep.* lx. 9. [2] *Ep.* vi. [3] *Ep.* xiv. [4] *Ep.* lxvii. 9.

[5] *Ep.* lii. On the death of Nepotianus Jerome wrote to Heliodorus a letter of consolation.

[6] Prefaces to *Libri Salomonis* and *Tobit*, Migne, ix. 1305; x. 26. Thierry's inference from the expression "Te castrasti propter regnum coelorum" is quite unjustifiable. The phrase was metaphorical, as in *Ep.* xxii. 30: "Quum . . . propter coelorum me regna castrassem."

[7] See *Ep.* vii.; *Praeff. in Libb. Tobit, Proverb, Abacuc, Paralip.* Pallad. ii. v.; Chrysost *E.p.* cxlv. [8] *Ep.* x.; *Catal.* 53.

we do not hear of a single female friend of his at Aquileia, though at Rome he was subsequently surrounded by a circle of admiring and devoted ladies. He must, however, have made the acquaintance of the wealthy and noble Melania,[1] daughter of the Consul Marcellinus, for it would appear that scandal, which seems to have been quite as rife and reckless in the fourth as in the nineteenth century, had libellously mixed up his name with hers.[2] Her story belongs rather to the life of Rufinus, who was her companion and spiritual adviser for many years in Palestine. Jerome extravagantly lauds the ascetic contempt for natural affections which induced her to sail on a pilgrimage to the East, leaving behind her a little son to the chance care of the city praetor.[3]

It was probably about the year 370, when he was twenty-four years old, that he made his first literary essay. At the request of Innocentius he narrated the remarkable story of "the woman seven times struck with an axe." The introduction to this narrative is in his worst style. He says that ease, like a rust of the intellect, had dried up his small faculty of eloquence, and that, since he dared not refuse his friend's request, he is like some landsman suddenly trusting himself to the roar of the Euxine with nothing but sea and sky around him, the night terrible with darkness, and nothing visible but the gleaming foam. The story was that a Christian woman at Vercellae had been accused of adultery with a young man, who, yielding to horrible torture, falsely confessed the crime, while the woman refused even in her deepest anguish to admit a lie. Both were condemned to death. The youth's head fell at a single stroke, but two executioners failed to kill the woman, though they struck her neck with the sword seven times. She was taken away under the belief that she was dead, but she revived, and an old woman who had died about the same time was buried in her name. She was concealed in male apparel, but was discovered, and with discreditable persistence her death was still demanded. This severity aroused the indignation of Evagrius, who was then staying with Eusebius, Bishop of Vercellae. He travelled hastily to Gaul and appealed to the Emperor Valen-

[1] Hylas had been a slave of Melania; *Ep.* iii. 3.

[2] *Ep.* xlv. 4: "Nullae aliae Romanae urbi fabulam praebuerunt nisi Paula et Melanium."

[3] *Ep.* xxxix. 4; *Chron. Ann.* 371; Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* 118.

tinian. The Emperor restored to liberty one who had been so miraculously restored to life. The letter, with its credulity, its graphic skill, and its rhetorical exaggeration, is an interesting specimen of Jerome's earliest style, and the incident which he relates furnished details to many subsequent stories of martyrdom.[1]

Evagrius, here first mentioned, was a man of great celebrity. He is possibly the Evagrius who trained Chrysostom in asceticism. He was disastrously mixed up in the history of the Meletian schism, which he subsequently inflamed by allowing himself most uncanonically to be consecrated bishop of one of the congregations into which Antioch was divided. His dignity, learning, and experience must have exercised great influence over the little community at Aquileia, in whose enthusiasm he shared.[2] The translation of Athanasius's *Life of Antony* which passes under his name is of doubtful genuineness.[3]

A sudden whirlwind, to use Jerome's expression, burst upon the Aquileian friends, and scattered them in various directions. What it was we cannot tell. Four words—"*subitus turbo, impia avulsio*"—exhaust his allusions to it.[4] All that we can see is that Jerome had a perfect genius for what would be called in modern times "getting into hot water." Quarrels and enmities pursued him everywhere, at every stage of his life. Like many other men of strong individuality—like Savonarola and Luther for instance—he was deeply loved and intensely hated. Had the storm any connexion with the sudden fall of his sister, and with the family dispute between him and his aunt Castorina? Stilting conjectures that his letter to Innocentius had excited against him the enmity of the provincial magistrate. This consular personage seems to have acted with great severity towards the poor innocent woman whose story Jerome had described, and Jerome, in his violent way, had spoken of him as "a wild beast, thirsting for blood, and gloating over the sight of gore." Such a description—for it must be remembered that in those days the letters of literary men were regarded as public property—might well have got him into trouble. But who was this Consular? Could it have been no less a person than St. Ambrose? It is a singular fact that Ambrose was the consular

[1] See Zöckler, p. 40.
[2] Jerome calls him "Acris et ferventis ingenii virum."
[3] *De Virr. ill.* 125. [4] *Ep.* iii. 3.

magistrate of Liguria and Æmilia about this very time.[1] Upright and religious as he was, it is certain that he was of a severe temperament as a magistrate, and we are expressly told that he caused torture to be applied to persons under trial (contrary indeed to his custom) to shock the people of Milan from their choice of him as bishop. Perhaps there was quite a different side to the strange story which Jerome tells. Certain it is that he had a dislike to Ambrose, and Rufinus has quoted some of the singularly bitter expressions which he applied to him.[2]

Whatever may have been the cause of this sudden explosion, it probably had some connexion with the bitter feelings which pursued Jerome after his flight from Aquileia. He tells us that in his native land (for which he expresses small affection) an "Iberian viper" was tearing him to pieces, but that he will trust his cause to the judgment of God, and will imitate the hero of Horace—

> "Even though around his head
> Crashing worlds their ruin spread,
> Undaunted he will stand."

He complains that Lupicinus, the presbyter of Stridon, who seems to have headed the cabal against him, was unworthy of his office.

Whatever the trouble was, however much it may have been caused by haste and indiscretion, it did not forfeit the respect of Jerome's friends. Eager to visit Jerusalem, and see the hermits of Syria and Egypt, he set out for the East, and was accompanied on his travels by Innocentius, Niceas, Heliodorus, and Hylas, while Evagrius, who, on the death of Eusebius of Vercellae, wished to return to his native Antioch, accompanied them as their guide and friend. They wandered with no very definite plan over Thrace, Bithynia, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Cilicia. At Rhossus, on the boundary of Cilicia, they rejoiced to make the acquaintance of Theodosius and his little band of hermits. They suffered cruelly from the fatigues of the journey and the terrific heat, and Antioch appeared to them like a haven

[1] He was elected bishop by acclamation in 374, a year before the death of Valentinian I.

[2] *Inv.* ii. 21-29. On the other hand he calls him "Ambrosius noster" in *Ep.* xxii. 22.

of refuge to shipwrecked men. But travel and ascetic practices had so overtaxed their strength that at Antioch, where they enjoyed the generous hospitality of Evagrius, Jerome succumbed to a complication of diseases, and Innocentius not only fell ill, but, to the intense grief of his friend, died.[1] His death was followed by that of the virtuous and faithful freedman Hylas, and Jerome, overwhelmed with these sorrows, lay ill for the greater part of a year, probably till the spring of 374.

Such a succession of misfortunes tended still further to break the last ties which bound Jerome to the world. When he recovered, his thirst for Scriptural knowledge led him to attend the discourses of Apollinaris, though he never fell into his heresy of the denial of Christ's perfect manhood. This teacher seems to have confirmed him in the allegorical method of explaining Scripture. He still yearned for the desert, and at Maronia, a country house of Evagrius, he made the acquaintance of the aged hermit Malchus, who told him the story of his life, which he afterwards committed to writing.[2] He was now alone; and since he failed to persuade Heliodorus and Niceas to accompany him, he determined in 374 to retire into the wilderness of Chalcis, and live among the communities of anchorites in the "Syrian Thebais."[3]

[1] *Ep.* iii. 3: "Ubi ego quicquid morborum esse poterat expertus."
[2] *Vita Malchi*, 2. [3] *Ep.* v. 1; *Praef. Comm. in Abdiam.*

XVI

Continued

JEROME IN THE WILDERNESS OF CHALCIS, AT ANTIOCH, AND AT CONSTANTINOPLE (A.D. 374-381).

"Ὅπου γὰρ ζῆλος καὶ ἐριθεία, ἐκεῖ ἀκαταστασία."—JAMES iii. 16.

SECTION IV

THE residence of Jerome in the wilderness of Chalcis lasted nearly five years. We cannot ascertain the exact order of its few records, but the events on which we shall touch in this chapter all belong to this period of his life.

The early part of this hermit life was agitated by those intense moral struggles which he describes in his letter to Eustochium.[1] It is sad to think that the violence of these struggles was increased rather than diminished by ascetic mortifications, by the concentration of thought upon carnal temptations, and by the miserable health and ruined digestion which arose from so wilful a method of life. The tedium of solitude was partially alleviated by manual labour, which enabled Jerome to support himself without being a burden on his fellow-monks.[2] No rule of monastic life was wiser than that which insisted on the duty of work. Unfortunately, however, in the East, the work was mostly of an idle and sedentary kind.[3]

There were three sorts of monks—*Coenobites* in large monas-

[1] See Zimmermann, *Von der Einsamkeit*, i. 263 ff.

[2] *Ep.* xvii. 2: "Nihil otiosus accipio. Manu quotidie et proprio sudore quaerimus cibum." It appears that articles made by monks acquired a certain sanctity and fetched a higher price. *Ep.* xxii. 34.

[3] *Ep.* cxxv. 11: "Facito aliquid operis, ut te semper diabolus inveniat occupatum."

teries, who occupied the first zone of the desert, which was on the confines of civilisation; *Remoboths* (as Jerome calls them), or independent monks, who lived in the second zone of the desert, free from any rule, but in companies of two or three; and *Hermits*, who dwelt alone in the depths of the wilderness, among wild beasts and scorpions, making their abode in mountain caves, and often passing long years without seeing a human face. The admiration which Jerome felt for the latter is shown by his *Life of Paul the Hermit*. Of the *Remoboth* he entirely disapproved.[1] He calls them *genus deterrimum*, and complains of their quarrels, their independence, their competition in fastings which should be kept secret, the ostentatious squalor of their dress, their affected sighs, their gluttonous carnivals, their habit of visiting virgins and of calumniating the secular clergy. It was the cœnobitic life which he most approved,[2] and which he recommended to others. "To me," he says, "a town is a prison, and the desert loneliness is Paradise."[3] We must think of him, therefore, as the inmate of a monastery, though he sometimes left it to plunge into the lonelier regions. Unfortunately, he tells us but little of his companions or of his daily mode of life. We hear only of his self-mortifications and literary labours, and, later on, of the bitter disputes in which he became entangled. In the desert of Chalcis he does not seem to have gained a single friend.

Whatever manual labours he may have occasionally undertaken, he soon devoted himself heart and soul to his studies. "Love the knowledge of the Scriptures," he wrote long afterwards to the monk Rusticus, "and you will not love the vices of the flesh." He had a plentiful supply of books in his own library, and others were lent him by Evagrius and friends in the neighbourhood. He had a little band of pupils, whom he trained as *amanuenses*.[4] But he still required some severe mental discipline to enable him to master his burning passions.[5] In order, therefore, to secure a more tranquil mastery over temptation, "I entrusted myself," he writes, "to the teaching of a certain brother who had been converted from Judaism, that, after the keen

[1] See *Ep.* xxii. 34. When we read such strong reprobation even in Jerome, we are not surprised at the bitter invectives against monks by heathen men of letters.

[2] *Ep.* xxii. 35.

[3] *Ep.* cxxv. 8, 9.

[4] *Ep.* v. 2: "Habeo alumnos qui Antiquariae arti serviunt."

[5] *Ep.* cxxv.

intellect of Quintilian, the rivers of Cicero, the dignity of Fronto, the gentleness of Pliny, I might learn the Hebrew alphabet and con its strident and panting vocables. My conscience, and that of those who lived with me, is witness of all the labour I spent on that study, the difficulty I endured, how often I despaired, how often I threw up the study, and in my zeal took it up again; and I thank God that, from the bitter seed, I cull the sweet fruit of literature." Long subsequently he was still labouring to obtain a perfect mastery of the language which he began to learn in this retreat. In Bethlehem he hired for a large sum the services of Baranina, a Jew, whom Rufinus maliciously calls his "Barabbas," and who, through the jealousies alike of Jews and Christians, could only venture to come to him, like Nicodemus, by night.[1] At another time, when he wished to understand the Hebrew text of the Books of the Chronicles, and to compare it with the Septuagint, he summoned the assistance of a great Rabbi from Tiberias.[2] Another of his tutors was so learned that the Jews looked up to him as though he had been a Chaldean.[3] In his search for knowledge Jerome never spared himself either trouble or expense. And he had his reward. He has the honour to be one of the very few Fathers, either Greek or Latin, who knew anything of the sacred language, and could explain the true meaning of the Old Testament by a reference to the original. His value as a commentator was increased tenfold by this knowledge, and by virtue of it he became an oracle to many centuries. It enabled him to carry out the Vulgate translation, which was the noblest and most valuable work of all his life. Among the earlier fruits of his Hebrew studies were the letter to Pope Damasus about the Seraphim,[4] and a translation into Greek and Latin of the interpolated Gospel of St. Matthew, which was known as the Gospel of the Hebrews, of which a copy was lent to him by the Nazarenes of the Syrian Beroea.[5]

To this period of his life belongs the dream of which he has

[1] *Ep.* lxxxiv. 3: "Quo labore, quo pretio Baraninam nocturnum habui praeceptorem! Timebat enim Judaeos et mihi alterum exhibebat Nicodemum."

[2] *Praef. in Paralip.* (Vallarsi, x. 432).

[3] *Ep.* xviii. 10. He was thus able to meet the cavils of Jews against the genuineness of the Old Testament quotations used by Christians. *Praef. in Isaj.* (Vallarsi, x. 686).

[4] *Ep.* xviii.

[5] *Catal.* 3; *Comm. in Matt. xii.* 13. Most of the fragments of this Gospel are only known to us through Jerome. See *c. Pelag.* iii. 2; *Comm. in Isaj.* xi. 2; *ad Matt. ii.* 5; *vi.* 11; *xii.* 13; *xxiii.* 13; *xxvii.* 35, 51. They are collected by Canon Westcott, *Introd. to the Gospels*, pp. 437-440.

given us so graphic a description. He could not wean himself from his fondness for classical literature. "Wretched man," he says, "I was fasting just before I meant to read Cicero. After many night-long vigils, after the tears which the recollection of my past sins drew from my very heart, I used to take up my Plautus. If, when I returned to myself, I began to read the Prophets, their rude speech made me shudder; and because I did not see the light with my blind eyes, I thought it was not the fault of my eyes but of the sun. While the old serpent was thus mocking me, about the middle of Lent a fever, of which the seeds were in me, seized on my exhausted frame; and, without any respite (which sounds incredible), so fed on my luckless limbs that my skin scarcely held to my bones. Meanwhile, my funeral was being prepared, and the vital heat of my soul barely palpitated in the slight warmth of my breast, while all my body was growing cold; when suddenly I was rapt in the spirit before the tribunal of the Judge; where there was such a flood of light, and such resplendence from the glory of the angel spectators, that, prostrate on the earth, I did not dare to uplift my eyes. Asked about my state, I answered that I was a Christian. '*Thou liest,*' answered He; '*thou art a Ciceronian, not a Christian; for where thy treasure is, there is thy heart.*' Instantly I became dumb, and, amid blows (for He had ordered me to be scourged), I was tortured still more by the fire of conscience, thinking over that verse, 'In hell who shall confess to Thee?' Yet I began to cry, and, wailing aloud, to say, '*Pity me, O Lord, pity me,*' amid the sounds of the lash. At length they who stood by, casting themselves before the knees of the Judge, prayed Him to pardon my youth, and to grant a place for repentance of my error, but to inflict torture on me afterwards if at any time I read the books of Gentile literature. I who, in these dread straits, would have been willing to promise even greater things, began to swear, and call on His name, and say, '*O Lord, if I ever possess secular manuscripts, if I ever read them, I have denied Thee.*' Dismissed after having taken this oath, I returned to the upper air, and, to the astonishment of all, opened my eyes bathed with such a flood of tears that my anguish convinced even the incredulous. Indeed, this had been no slumber nor vain dream by which we are often deceived. That tribunal before which I lay, that grim judgment which I feared, is my witness; may I never again be thus brought to trial! I confess that my

shoulders were dark with weals; that, after awaking, I felt the blows, and that thenceforth I read Divine books with a zeal more ardent than I had read human books before."[1]

Such was "the story of his unhappiness," which he narrated to Eustochium ten or twelve years after the event; and in order to dissuade her from reading the classics he asked, "What has Horace to do with the Psalter? Virgil with the Gospels? Cicero with the Apostles? all things are pure to the pure, but we ought not to drink the cup of Christ and the cup of demons."[2]

There can be no doubt that, at the time, Jerome was deeply impressed by this dream. It was in fact but the misgiving of his own conscience projected into the nightmare of severe fever.[3] He wrote to Paula and Eustochium that, for fifteen years, he had never so much as taken up a book of Virgil, Cicero, or any other heathen writer; that the jarring of Hebrew utterance had debased his style, and that if ever he made a chance quotation it was but a reminiscence of the past which came to him through the cloud of dreamland.[4] Now, most of Jerome's biographers say that the frequency of his quotations from Pagan authors, even down to his latest writings, is a sufficient proof that he did not keep the vow of his dream. As far as this is concerned, the proof would be insufficient. A retentive memory, even in these days, keeps firm hold of much which was only read in childhood and early youth, and in Jerome's day the memory was not loaded with superfluities and distracted by endless intellectual interests.[5] But there are surer proofs that Jerome's renunciations of the Greek and Latin classics must not be taken literally. When Magnus asked him why he introduced so many Pagan quotations, he answered that Moses and the Prophets had borrowed from the Gentiles, and Solomon from Syrian philosophers; that St. Paul had quoted Epimenides, Menander, Callimachus, and Aratus; and that a multitude of eminent ecclesiastical writers before him

[1] *Ep.* xxii. 30.

[2] He expresses similar sentiments to Damasus in *Ep.* xxi. 13. Tertullian had already asked "Quid Ecclesiae et Academiae?"

[3] Ozanam, *Hist. de la Civilis.* i. 301. Even Antony (Athanas. *Vit. Ant.* 42) is made to say that evil spirits take the form in which they find us at the time, and "*are the reflex of our thoughts and fantasies.*"

[4] *Praef. lib.* iii. *Comment. in Galat.* (Vallarsi, vii. 486).

[5] Jerome in different writings quotes from Virgil and Horace frequently, and from Terence, Persius, Varro, Sallust, Seneca, Suetonius, Pliny, Quintilian. He less frequently refers to Greek writers, but makes reference to Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus, Demosthenes, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Galen, and others.

had practically shared the views which led him to use Pagan testimonies for Christian purposes.[1] Even in 378 he wrote to the hermit Paul of Concordia for a volume of Aurelius Victor,[2] and when he was at Bethlehem he had employed monks to copy out some dialogues of Cicero for his own use, and had given lessons to boys in classical authors. Rufinus, not very generously, charges him with perjury, and he is obviously embarrassed by the charge. He tries, indeed, to laugh the accuser out of court, but the weakness of his defence, and the remark that a vow made in a dream is only a part of a *dream*,[3] are sufficient to show that, in his riper judgment, it was not obligatory to abandon all Pagan reading, but only to make it wholly subordinate to sacred studies.[4]

Two writings which had a widely-extended influence were written during the leisure of his life in the desert, and were due to the fervour of his early enthusiasm.

One was the *Life of Paul the Hermit*, which he dedicated to the other Paul, his aged friend the hermit of Concordia. He purposely wrote it in a simple style that it might reach the multitude. He seems to think that some will doubt his statement that Paul lived for so many years on dates and barley bread; and he calls Jesus and the angels to witness[5] that, in the desert of Chalcis, he has seen, and still sees, monks, of whom one had lived for thirty years on barley bread and muddy water, and another on five dates a day, which were flung down to him at the bottom of an old tank. Apparently he thinks that the adventures of the hermits with centaurs and satyrs; the feeding of Paul by ravens, who daily brought him half a loaf of bread, but brought a whole loaf when Antony came to see him; and the digging of Paul's grave by two lions whom Antony dismissed with the blessing of Christ, will not prove stumbling-blocks to any one's credulity! It appears, however, from his subsequent *Life of Hilarion*,[6] that *since no one had ever seen Paul*, there were

[1] *Ep.* lxx. (written about A.D. 397, nearly a quarter of a century after the dream).

[2] *Ep.* x. 3. He says that it is "Propter notitiam persecutorum."

[3] *C. Ruf.* i. 31: "Qui somnium criminatur audiat prophetarum voces, somniis non esse credendum," etc. This is very unlike what he had said to Eustochium.

[4] For his mature opinion on the subject, see *Ep.* lxxxiii. Origen, Basil, and Augustine took the same wise and moderate view. *De Doctr. Christ.* ii. 60.

[5] Jerome is fond of these too emphatic formulae.

[6] *Vit. Hilarionis, Prol.*

some who denied his existence, and looked upon this biography as a religious romance.[1] By the world in general the fable was implicitly believed, and it tended in no small degree to swell the admiration for a mode of life which despised all the ordinary means of grace, and is equally at variance with Scripture and the beneficent teaching of God in the laws of nature.[2]

All Jerome's letters of this period glow with the fervour of the ascetic neophyte, but the most remarkable of them is the famous letter to Heliodorus. He vainly pleads with the better sense and calmer spirit of his friend to abandon the duties of a presbyter in his native city, and to share his life in the desert. This letter expresses Jerome's most perverse conception of perfectness. He tries to frighten Heliodorus from the duties of the ministry by language of extravagant sacerdotalism. He strives to show that a priest is in terrible danger if his virtues be not altogether superhuman, while at the same time he more than half implies that such virtues are unattainable except in flight from the common world. The letter is full of taunts, glowing descriptions, impassioned appeals. "Away," he says, "with prayers; to the winds with blandishments. You despised me when I entreated; perhaps you will hear me when I reproach. Effeminate soldier! what are you doing in your paternal home? Lo! the trumpet sounds from heaven! Lo! with clouds the Captain sets forth armed to subdue the world! Lo! the twice-sharpened sword proceeding from his mouth mows down all obstacles. And dost *thou* set forth from the chamber into the battle; from the shade into the sun? Lo! the adversary in thy breast endeavours to slay Christ. Lo! the camp of the enemy sighs for the donative[3] which thou receivedst when about to go

[1] The legend says that when Antony visited him he had lived ninety years, from A.D. 250-340, in the desert. Jerome writes thirty years after Paul's death on the authority of two pupils of Antony, Anathas and Macarius. The recent researches of Weingarten (*Ursprung der Mönchthums*, 1876) and Israel (*Zeitschr. f. wissensch. Theol.* 1880) seem to prove that Jerome's Lives of Paul and Hilarion are mere romances, unconfirmed by any other evidences, and in many particulars intrinsically absurd. See Gwatkin's *Arians*, p. 99.

[2] On Paul of Thebes, see *Acta Sanctorum*, and Alban Butler on Jan. 17; Möhler, *Athan. d. Grosse*, pp. 382-402; Tillemont, vii. 101-144; Böhringer, i. 2, 122-151. The number of anchorets and coenobites who flocked to the desert in consequence of reading the Lives of Paul and Hilarion is almost incredible. See Rufin. *Vit. Patrum*. ii. 7; Aug. *De Morib. Eccles.* i. 31. If the Lives of Paul, Hilarion, and Antony are mere novels and inventions, they must be regarded as a very pernicious tampering with the domain of history.

[3] Here apparently in the sense of "earnest-money."

to war. Though thy little nephew should hang about thy neck, though with hair dishevelled and rent garments thy mother should show thee the breasts with which she nurtured thee, though thy father should lie on the threshold, trample over his body with dry eyes and fly to the standard of the Cross! In a matter like this, to be cruel is the only true filial affection."[1] This extravagant rhetoric had an immense fascination for the ladies of Rome. Fabiola, many years afterwards, could repeat the letter to Jerome by heart, and such exhortations induced the noblest matrons to fling away every human affection with unnatural callousness, and to abandon the duties to which God had called them for others at once less necessary and less blessed.[2] Jerome's letter is highly elaborated, and has echoes of Cicero, Tertullian, and Cyprian. In later years, writing to Nepotianus, he alludes to this letter to his uncle, who had then become Bishop of Altinum, and half apologises for it as almost a boyish composition, full of tears and complaints, and betraying a florid and scholastic style. He bids him not to expect of an old man those puerile declamations, flowery sentiments, attractive phrases, and epigrammatic conclusions which arouse the shouts and applause of listeners. He will instruct him with a maturer wisdom.[3]

It seemed to be Jerome's destiny that he should never find peace anywhere. There was something in his style and personality which awoke controversy and stirred up animosities against him. The life of an eremite gave him none of the repose from worldly cares for which he sighed. His stay in the desert of Chalcis, like his stay at Aquileia, ended in thunderstorms. The main cause of his disquietude was the Meletian schism, which rent in sunder the Church of Antioch, and which also troubled the lives of Basil and many other Fathers of this epoch. It lasted through a great part of the fourth century, and did not end till the year 413. This schism took its start in doctrinal differences, but was fostered and kept alive by the rivalry of opposing bishops.[4]

[1] *Ep.* xiv.; *De laude eremi.* In writing to Heliodorus twenty-three years later he alludes to the last outburst (*Ep.* lx. 9), when Nepotianus, the *parvulus nepos*, had died.

[2] Origen, with much greater wisdom than Jerome, blames wives who left their husbands even from ascetic motives. *Comm. in Matt. xiv.* 24, 25.

[3] *Ep.* lii. 1, 4.

[4] On the Meletian schism at Antioch, see Jer. *Chron. ad ann.* 364; Chrys.

If anything could have shaken the early Church in its adoption of the episcopal organisation, it would have been the shocking circumstances by which the institution was constantly attended. Had the bishops of the Church been still content, in her hour of triumph, to live in the humble simplicity of their predecessors; if they had been strenuously on their guard against pride, avarice, worldliness, and ambition; had they abstained from the turbulent arena of politicians and partisans,—all would have been well. But a bishopric—and especially the patriarchates of the great cities—had become in the fourth century a prize so splendid as even to tempt the cupidity of Pagan magistrates. "Make me Bishop of Rome," said the Roman Praefect Praetextatus to Damasus, "and I will turn Christian at once."[1]

Many indeed of the great Christian bishops—men like Basil, Augustine, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Chrysostom—lived in rigid simplicity, and employed the splendid revenues of their sees in works of charity and piety. But others, like Theophilus of Alexandria and Nectarius of Constantinople, rivalled the wealthiest officials in the pomp and luxury with which they were surrounded.[2] They grasped at a despotic authority which they maintained by the most unscrupulous means, "assuming the language and garb of despots with the temper and trade of executioners." Origen, in his *Commentary on St. Matthew*, says that even in his day Christian priests either wholly forgot or despised the admonitions of Jesus, and in their affectation of pomp even outdid bad rulers among the Pagans. They surrounded themselves with a guard, made themselves feared, and were especially difficult of access to the poor. "And," he says, "in many of our so-called churches, especially in the larger towns, may be found bishops who would refuse to own even the best among the disciples of Jesus as their equals." Chrysostom describes them as "first at court, in the society of ladies, in the houses of the great." Men and women of the highest rank knelt to them, kissed their hands, prostrated themselves at their feet. They wore the most superb ecclesiastical vestments em-

Hom. in Melet.; Socrates, iii. 9; v. 9, 17; Sozomen, iv. 28; vii. 10, 11; Theodoret, v. 35.

[1] Jer. *in Joann. Hierosol.*

[2] Ammianus Marcellinus commends some of the bishops of smaller sees, who differed in no respect from our rectors except in name, for their moderation and simplicity in dress and food, and for the modest devotion of their bearing, xxvii. 3, sec. 14.

broidered with gold and enriched with gems. They revelled in pompous titles, such as "your beatitude" and "your sanctity." They appeared abroad in magnificent apparel, and worldly pomp, lolling in lofty chariots. The candid Pagan Ammianus Marcellinus describes the eagerness displayed to secure the bishopric of Rome; and this, he says, does not surprise him, for when a man has once secured it he is enriched by the offerings of ladies, assumes all the state of a patrician noble, and is able to give banquets so splendid that they surpass the luxury of kings.[1]

The heathen must have secretly exulted as they watched the scandals which often accompanied the elections to metropolitan sees. They found an excuse for rejecting Christianity when they witnessed the fury, the unscrupulousness, the reckless cruelty, which, in the endeavour to win spiritual offices, did not hesitate to deluge even the churches with blood. Such scenes were enacted at Rome in A.D. 366. "Damasus and Ursinus," says the historian, "burning beyond all human limits to seize the episcopal throne, contested with the most factious rivalry and fierceness, and their respected followers did not even shrink from wounds and bloodshed. It is known that in the basilica of Sicinninus, where is a meeting-place of the Christian rite, 137 bodies of the slain were found in a single day;[2] and that the common people, long exasperated to madness, were with difficulty calmed." We read of scenes no less deplorable in the lives of Athanasius, of Gregory of Nazianzus, of Chrysostom, and many others;[3] and indeed similar factions had disgraced the election of other popes.

So aggravated was the condition of things in Antioch that three bishops at one time claimed to be the sole legitimate possessors of the patriarchal dignity, and there was an Arian bishop

[1] Amm. Marc. xxvii. 3, sec. 12: "Cum, id adepti, futuri sint ita securi, ut ditentur oblationibus matronarum, procedantque vehiculis insidentes, circumspecte vestiti, epulas curantes profusas, adeo ut eorum convivia regales superent mensas."

[2] Faustinus and Marcellinus, two priests of Ursinus, say 160 men and women; but the only accounts of the matter come from the enemies of Damasus. They angrily call him a "matronarum *auriscalpius*," and many years of his life were embittered by a false charge of adultery.

[3] The chief authorities for this Roman schism are Rufinus, *H. E.* ii. 10; Jer. *Chron. ad ann.* 364; Amm. Marc. xxvii. 3, secs. 11-14; Socrates, iv. 29. Faustinus and Marcellinus support the claims of Ursinus (in their *Libellus precum ad Imp. Theodos.*), and charge Damasus with three distinct massacres on Oct. 1 and Oct. 26, 366, and Sept. 15, 367.

besides. Not even the Church of Corinth in the days of St. Paul was more hopelessly rent asunder by religious faction. In the year 360 Meletius, Bishop of Sebaste,[1]—whose piety, together with his "sweet calm look, radiant smile, and kind hand seconding the kind voice,"[2] had made him universally beloved,—had been summoned to the metropolitan see.

Antioch had gone through deplorable times. Its excellent prelate, Eustathius, had been deposed in 327 on false charges of heresy and adultery.[3] He had been succeeded by the Arian Euphronius, and the truly execrable Stephen. On the deposition of this person by Constantius because of his share in an infamous plot to entangle the bishop-delegates from the Council of Rimini in a charge of impurity,[4] he was succeeded in 349 by the eunuch Leontius, who, in his desire for peace at any price, used to mumble the doxology in such a way as to leave it quite uncertain whether he was using the Arian or the orthodox formula.[5] Touching his white hairs he used to say, "When this snow melts, there will be much mud";[6] and he was right. For on his death in 357 the see was usurped by the Arian Eudoxius, and when in 361 he managed to depose Macedonius of Constantinople and procure his own election to that patriarchate, Meletius, then Bishop of Sebaste, was elected Bishop of Antioch.

The election was welcomed alike by the Arians who had followed the former bishop, Eudoxius, and who believed that Meletius held their views; and by the orthodox followers of Eustathius, who knew the real soundness of his opinions. For these reasons both parties accepted the recommendation of the Emperor Constantius. In his first public address Meletius had wished to avoid disputed dogmas, and to aim only at spiritual edification. But on being challenged to state his faith by Constantius, who, in his visit to Antioch, ordered him to preach on Prov. viii. 22,[7] he distinctly declared himself an adherent of the doctrine decided by the Council of Nice, that "the Son" was

[1] Socrates (ii. 44) says that he had already been translated from Sebaste to Beroea, and that there he had signed the semi-Arian creed of Acacius.

[2] Greg. Nyss. *Orat. in fun. Meletii.*

[3] Socr. i. 23.

[4] Athan. *Hist. Arian.* 20, 21.

[5] Sozomen, iii. 20.

[6] "Every one pointed to her" (Queen Elizabeth's) "white hair, and said with that peaceable Leontius, 'When this snow melteth, there will be a flood.'"—Bishop Hall's *Sermons.*

[7] This text in the LXX. runs, "The Lord *created* (ἔκτισε) me," and from it the Arian idly argued that the Son was a "creature," κτίσμα. For this curious scene, see Theod. ii. 31; Sozom. iv. 28.

not only of *like* substance (ὁμοιούσιος), but "of the *same* substance" (ὁμοούσιος) with the Father. The Arian archdeacon tried to stop his mouth, but while he was forcibly prevented from speaking he first extended three fingers towards the people and then closed them, and in this way he intimated the orthodoxy of his belief. When the archdeacon freed his mouth and seized his hand, he expressed himself still more clearly by saying, "Our minds conceive of Three, but we speak as to One." The Arians, thus undeceived, were furious, and charging Meletius with Sabellianism —the usual taunt against the Homoousian party—they met together to depose him, and gained over the ever-wavering Emperor to appoint Euzoius, a friend of Arius, in his place. Meletius was banished to his native Melitene, in Armenia, thirty days after his election.

But this was not all. Since Meletius partly owed his appointment to the Arians, the old orthodox followers of Eustathius withdrew to another church with the presbyter Paulinus, who had the full confidence of Athanasius. On the death of Constantius a council, which met at Alexandria in 362, endeavoured to heal the schism, and ordered Paulinus and his followers to unite with Meletius. Meanwhile, however, the impetuous and opinionated Lucifer of Calaris—"a confessor whose dogmatic zeal was too intolerant for Athanasius or Jerome"—had gone to Antioch, and had rashly consecrated Paulinus to be bishop.[1] In consequence of this the schism continued 85 years, only ending with the election of Alexander in 413. Damasus and the Western Church with Athanasius were in communion with Paulinus; Basil and the Eastern Church cordially recognised Meletius. Meletius was even chosen to preside at the second Œcumenical Council—the Council of Constantinople—in 381, and died while the council was sitting. Meanwhile, however, to make matters still worse, Apollinaris of Laodicea in 376 had consecrated yet another bishop named Vitalis, a follower of his own and a sharer of his heresy.

Each of the four bishops and anti-bishops had his impassioned adherents, and their clamour even penetrated into the desert. The three orthodox factions were equally eager to secure the adherence of so distinguished a supporter as Jerome. Of the three he inclined decidedly to Paulinus, but since all three claimed the support and sanction of Pope Damasus, he determined to

[1] On Lucifer, see Socr. iii. 9, Sozom. iii. 15.

refer the matter to him and abide by his arbitration. He angered all the factions alike by declaring that he would not acknowledge any one of the three until he had received the infallible answer of Damasus. "I know not Vitalis," he says, "I reject Meletius, I ignore Paulinus."[1] Meanwhile he could communicate with none of them, but only with certain Egyptian confessors whom the Arian Emperor Valens had banished to Diocaesarea, and whom he knew to possess the confidence of the Roman bishop. It would have been a manlier and wiser course to form his own opinion, for he must have possessed far better data on which to found a decision than either Damasus or any of the Western bishops, whose interference had no effect but to widen the existing breach.

The exasperation of episcopal partisans was still further embittered by the fierceness of theological acrimony. It made no difference to what Melancthon calls the "*rabies theologorum*" that the dispute was purely a matter of words. In the West it was common to speak of the Trinity as "*one Hypostasis* (in the sense of *ousia*) *in three Persons* (πρόσωπα)," and this was the formula adopted by Paulinus. Meletius, on the other hand, in accordance with the Eastern terminology, spoke of "one *Ousia* and three *Hypostases*." Both meant exactly the same thing, but the divergent phraseology furnished an excuse for rage and schism. Arian partisans charged Paulinus with Sabellianism,[2] and Nicene partisans charged Meletius with Arianism because the form "*three* Hypostases" seemed to deny the Homoousian creed.[3] "Both the Westerns and ourselves," said Gregory of Nazianzus, "piously declare that there is one Essence and three Hypostases; but since the parsimony of their language furnishes no separate rendering for *Ousia* and *Hypostasis*, they have been compelled to introduce the word *Prosopon* ('Person') that they may not seem to acknowledge three Essences. Could anything be more ludicrous or pitiable (than to make this a matter of dispute)? A mere petty difference of sound is made to appear as though it were a difference of belief."[4] The Meletians were charged with

[1] *Ep.* xv. 2.

[2] Aug. *Opus Imperf.* v. 25: "Ariani Catholicos Sabellianos vocant."

[3] "Of *one* substance with the Father." In those days it was dreadfully difficult to be technically orthodox. For instance, Marcellus of Ancyra, in his zeal for the Nicene faith, was deposed for Sabellianism (A.D. 336) by the Easterns, but declared orthodox by the Westerns.

[4] *Orat.* 21: The Nicene Council regarded *Ousia* and *Hypostasis* as identical,

confounding the Persons; the Paulinians with dividing the substance.

Jerome tried to keep aloof from these disputes, but piteously complains to Damasus that he was not allowed to do so. Quoting the line of Horace, "They change their climate, not their mind, who run across the sea," he says, "An indefatigable foe has so followed me, that now in the solitary life I suffer yet worse conflicts. For on one side the Arian madness raves, supported by the safeguards of the world. Hence the Church, split into three factions, is in a hurry to snatch me into itself. Meanwhile, I keep crying out, 'if any one is joined to the chair of Peter, he is mine.' Meletius, Paulinus, Vitalis, declare themselves your followers. I might believe it if only one of them said it. Now, either two of them lie, or all three. Therefore, I implore your Beatitude by the Cross of Christ that you, who are next to the Apostles in honour, should also be next to them in desert. Do not despise a soul for which Christ died."[1] The passionate urgency of the entreaty shows the vehemence with which Jerome was persecuted, and how eagerly he was waiting an answer to a previous letter, in which he had bewailed that he, a Roman, was now pressed to adopt a new term, and that the offspring of the Arians[2] required him to acknowledge "three Hypostases. I ask the meaning of the phrase, and I am told 'it means three subsistent Persons.' 'That I believe,' is my reply; but the meaning is not sufficient, they demand the exact term, because I know not what poison lurks in a syllable. . . . And because I do not learn these terms by heart I am judged a heretic. If, however, any one means by 'Hypostasis' the same as *Ousia*, and does not admit that there are 'three persons and one Hypostasis,' he is alien from Christ; and under this confession you and I are alike branded with the stigma of Sabellianism.[3] Decide, if you will, I beseech you, and then I shall not be afraid to speak of 'three Hypostases.' If you bid it, let a new faith after the

Athan. *Ep. ad Afros*, 4: ἡ ὑπόστασις οὐσία ἐστι . . . ἡ γὰρ ὑπόστασις καὶ ἡ οὐσία ὕπαρξίς ἐστι. The Nicene Creed had the words ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίας.

[1] *Ep.* xvi.

[2] *I.e.* the Miletians. But in Rome and Alexandria such expressions as "three *Hypostases* or *Ousiai*" were considered Arian. Basil, on the other hand (*Ep.* 38), held it most important to acknowledge "three Hypostases," because Sabellius taught "one Hypostasis." See Gieseler, i. 343.

[3] Sabellius held that there was only one Person—πρόσωπον ἐννπόστατον. Thus he "confounded the Persons." This heresy was sometimes called *Unio*, and Jerome's words are "cauterio *Unionis* inurimur" (*Ep.* xv. 3).

Nicene be formulated, and let only the orthodox confess in like words with the Arians. 'Whoever gathereth not with you scattereth, that is, he who is not of Christ is of Antichrist.'"

Thus did Jerome abnegate all personal responsibility, and with a blind acceptance of a baseless authority prostrate his right and duty of individual judgment at the feet of a man in no respects better or more inspired, nor by any means so capable or learned as himself. Whenever he discovered the decision of Rome he was always ready to set pen and tongue to work. He was as slavish in this dependence on Romish tradition as he was daringly independent in scholarly criticism. So anxious was he for a reply that he begs Damasus to address his answer to the care of Evagrius, lest the obscurity of the spot in which he is living should render the letter-carriers unable to find him. But no answer came; or if it came it did not arrive in time to prevent a crisis.

For things grew worse and worse. In 379, fully two years after his letters to Damasus, he writes to the presbyter Marcus in terms of yet more aggrieved feeling. He exclaims against the barbarousness of his desert home, and quotes the lines of the Æneid—

> "Quod genus hoc hominum? quaeve hunc tam barbara morem
> Permittit patria? hospitio prohibemur arenae."

The ignorant opinionativeness and frantic partisanship of the monks disgusted him. "Why," he asks, "do they call me a heretic and a Sabellian, agreeing as I do with the West and with Egypt? Why do they heap their charges on a single head? . . . I am ashamed to speak of it! From the cells of caverns we condemn the world! Wrapped in sackcloth and ashes, we pass our opinions on bishops. What room is there for the pride of a king under the tunic of a penitent? Chains, filth, long hair, are not the signs of a diadem but of weeping. Let them only permit me to hold my tongue. 'I am a heretic.' Well! what is that to you? Say it, and have done with it. You fear, I suppose, that I shall go round the churches and, in the highest style of Syriac or Greek eloquence, shall seduce the people, and effect a schism! I have robbed no one of anything; I receive nothing as a drone. Daily I earn my food with my hands and with the sweat of my brow. Jesus is my witness, Holy Father, with what groaning, with what grief, I have written thus. . . . Not even a

single corner of the desert is conceded to me. I am daily questioned about my faith, as though I had been born again without faith. I confess, as they wish; it does not please them. I subscribe; they do not believe me. They have but one wish —to get rid of me. I am on the point of going; they have robbed me of a part of my life, my dearest brethren. Lo! they desire to depart—nay, they do depart, saying that it is better to live among wild beasts than with *such* Christians;[1] and I myself would fly at this very moment, did not the weakness of my body and the severity of the winter keep me back. I, however, implore them to grant me the hospitality of the desert for a few months till the spring arrives; if that seems too slow for them I will go at once!"[2]

Thus had Jerome's dreams of a paradisiacal peace in the desert met with a very rude disillusionment! Theologic fury and bitter party-spirit reared its throne of Antichrist even on the desert sands.

Whether the answer of Damasus to his two urgent appeals ever reached him we do not know; but we next find him at Antioch, where he could always enjoy the generous hospitality of his friend Evagrius.[3] He joined the communion of Paulinus. By Paulinus he was ordained a presbyter, without positive opposition on his own part, but still against his own will. He had never been a deacon. He wished to live as a monk, not as a presbyter, and he never exercised priestly functions, of which, as we see from his letter to Heliodorus. he had the utmost dread. To the last he remained a presbyter in name alone. "It is doubtful," says Bishop Wordsworth, "whether he ever preached a single sermon or administered a single Eucharist."[4]

About this time he wrote his Dialogue between a Luciferian and an orthodox person.[5] Since his consecration of Paulinus to the episcopate, Lucifer had fallen into a heresy, to which Jerome perhaps alludes in the expression in his letter to Damasus, "Now in the

[1] Julian said that wild beasts had more regard for each other than contending Christians (Amm. Marc. xxi. 5, sec. 1). So far are we from the days when men exclaimed, "How these Christians love one another!"

[2] *Ep.* xvii. *ad Marcum Presbyterum.*

[3] *Lib. c. Joann. Hierosolymit.* and *Ep. Epiphanii ad Joann.* (*Ep.* 51).

[4] The statement seems to be a little too strong. He refers to what were practically *Sermons* of his at Bethlehem.

[5] Augustine (*Ep.* clxxxv. sec. 47) and Ambrose (*De Excessu Satyri*) speak of him as a schismatic; but he seems to have been rather an extreme purist.

East dawns the Sun of righteousness, but in the West the Lucifer who has fallen has placed his throne above the stars."[1] Lucifer himself was by this time dead.[2] His chief fault seems to have been an excess of zeal in refusing any *locus poenitentiae* to any bishop who had even inclined to Semi-Arianism after the Council of Rimini. This extreme and unrelenting purism led him to defy the pacific aims of the Council of Alexandria towards the Church of Antioch. Jerome, in his *Dialogue*—which professes to be the report of an actual debate held at Antioch—speaks of Lucifer himself with respect.[3] The treatise is far less acrimonious than his later controversial writings; and besides its valuable account of the Council of Rimini it contains some of the brilliant turns of expression for which he is famous. It is here that we find the well-known sentences, "The whole world groaned, and was amazed to find itself Arian";[4] and "the Son of God did not come down to earth only for the sake of the skin-robe of Sardinians."[5] Jerome shows great skill in the management of dialogue, and had more of his writings assumed this form it might have tended to greater fairness, and a less vehement indulgence in the sneers and denunciations which disgrace so many of his pages.

Antioch at that time could not have been a pleasant residence for any one who desired peace, and we are not surprised that Jerome soon left it for a visit to Constantinople. Since he could not be a coenobite of the desert he determined to devote his whole ardour to Scriptural and theological studies, and he was drawn to Constantinople by the fame of Gregory of Nazianzus, who had been elected to the patriarchate.[6] He always looked up with admiration to this wise teacher, and is fond of recording the debt which he owed him.[7] He has preserved us one pleasant little

[1] *Ep.* xv. 1. Augustine makes a similar allusion to his name, *Ep.* clxxxv. 47.

[2] He died in 371; the Dialogue was held in 378.

[3] "Constanter loquar verbis eum dissentire a nobis, non rebus." He also (sec. 20) calls him "beatus," and "bonus pastor." On this Dialogue, see Hooker, iii. 1, sec. 9, 10; v.-lx. sec. 6.

[4] *Dial. c. Lucif.* 19: "Ingemuit totus orbis et Arianum se esse miratus est."

[5] "Nec ob Sardorum tantum mastrucam Dei filium descendisse." Calaris (Cagliari), the see of Lucifer, was in Sardinia. Other well-known sentences are "Consensus totius orbis instar praecepti," and "Ecclesia non est quae non habet sacerdotes."

[6] The actual title of "Patriarch," given to the Bishops of Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, is later.

[7] *Ep.* 1, *c. Jovin.* 1, *c. Ruf.* 1, *in Eph. v.* 32, *in Isaj.* vi., *Catal.* 117.

anecdote of the great Cappadocian Father, which must not be taken too seriously. "Once," he writes to Nepotianus, "my teacher, Gregory Nazianzen, having been requested by me to explain the meaning of the 'second-first Sabbath'[1] in Luke, wittily replied, 'I will teach you about that matter in church, where, when all the people are applauding me, you will be compelled against your will to know what you don't know; or if you alone remain silent, you alone will be condemned by all for foolishness.' There is a playful satire in the answer, which avoided the necessity of pleading ignorance, and yet conveyed the same salutary lesson as the motto of the Rabbis, 'Learn to say, I do not know.'"

At Constantinople Jerome also made the acquaintance of Gregory of Nyssa, the brother of Basil, who read to him and his friend the patriarch his books against Eunomius. We should have been exceedingly glad if Jerome had given us clearer glimpses of the history of these deeply interesting bishops, and of the years which he spent in the Eastern capital. Unfortunately, however, none of the letters which he must have written between the years 379 and 382 are extant, if we except the tractate on the Seraphim, addressed to Damasus, which is rather a philological pamphlet than a letter.[2] It shows the deep influence of Origen, and though it does not blindly follow his authority, yet adopts his allegoric method.

His time must have been busily occupied. He translated into Latin the *Chronicon* of Eusebius, with a continuation from A.D. 325, where Eusebius had ended, down to 378. He also translated fourteen Homilies of Origen on Jeremiah, and fourteen on Ezekiel, the latter task being hindered greatly by a painful affection of the eyes which he had brought on by too assiduous reading and by a difficulty in procuring the aid of secretaries. At this time he had the profoundest admiration for the Alexandrian theologian, and he quotes the opinion of Didymus, who had called Origen the greatest teacher of the Church since St. Paul. With the exception of his sufferings from injured eyesight, Jerome's stay at Constantinople was probably the happiest period of his maturer years.

[1] Luke vi. 1, *σάββατον δευτερόπρωτον.*
[2] *Ep.* xviii., cf. *in Isaj. l. iii.* p. 89.

XVI

Continued

JEROME AT ROME (A.D. 381-385)

"Quid Romae faciam? mentiri nescio."
JUV. *Sat.*

SECTION V

AT the close of A.D. 381 Jerome left Constantinople to reside once more in Rome. We do not know the circumstances which led to this change of residence. He says it was due to "ecclesiastical necessity."[1] It is probable that Damasus expressly summoned him. The literary Pope naturally desired to have such a man as Jerome near him, and his knowledge of the details of the Meletian schism may have furnished a special reason for inviting him.

On the death of Meletius the schism ought to have ended, in accordance with the express compact of that bishop with his rival Paulinus, for they had agreed that the undivided see should be assigned to the survivor. The jealousy of the Eastern bishops assembled in the Council of Constantinople led them to set aside this arrangement, and they elected Flavian in order not to give a triumph to Damasus and the Western bishops who supported Paulinus. Damasus therefore summoned a council at Rome. Paulinus and Epiphanius on their way to the council came to Constantinople, and Jerome accompanied them to Rome. He was at once appointed ecclesiastical secretary to Damasus and to the council.[2] The notion that he was made a "cardinal" or bishop at Rome, though asserted even in early times, is sufficiently

[1] *Ep.* cxxvii. 7.

[2] *Ep.* cxxiii. 10.

refuted by his own silence respecting it;[1] but his position was no doubt splendid and influential.

In the proceedings of the council—of which the acts are lost—he was, according to his usual fate, almost immediately involved in a serious quarrel. Owing to his having been a hearer of Apollinaris, he seems to have been employed to draw up some confession of faith which would counteract the Apollinarian heresy, and in this he had used the expression, "*Homo Dominicus*" (a rendering of ἄνθρωπος κυριακός), as a designation of Christ, for which he appealed to the authority of Athanasius. But when the manuscript of Athanasius was sent for by the council, it appeared that there had been an erasure, and that the words ἄνθρωπος κυριακός had been written over it. The Apollinarians at once accused Jerome of forgery, but it was afterwards known that the manuscript had been tampered with by one of themselves who had scratched the words out and written them in again for the express purpose of damaging his opponent. Such were the infamous expedients of controversy! It was unworthy and malicious of Rufinus to narrate this story afterwards in his *Apology for Origen*, though he did not mention Jerome's name.[2] Jerome, in his answer to Rufinus, is indignant that a trivial calumny of this kind, which Rufinus had only heard from his own lips, should have been needlessly foisted into a serious theological treatise. The anecdote, however, has its value, for it shows us the prevalence of forgery, and puts us on our guard against heretical interpolations in the works of the Fathers.

Damasus deserves the gratitude of the Church for the zeal with which he stimulated the literary activity of his secretary. He consulted him about the meaning of the word *Hosanna*,[3] about the Parable of the Prodigal Son,[4] and about various Old Testament questions.[5] He enjoined on him the laborious but most useful task of producing an edition of the Gospels which should represent them as they were in the Greek, and check the tide of carelessness which had reduced to chaos the Latin manuscripts.[6]

[1] Baronius gives it up.

[2] See *Origenis Opp.* ed. Bened. iv. 53, 54; *c. Ruf.* ii. 20.

[3] *Ep.* xx.

[4] *Ep.* xxi.

[5] *Epp.* xxxv. xxxvi., *De quinque quaestionibus.* His treatment of these questions is in his usual energetic style—arbitrary and allegoric, but abounding in valuable details derived from his immense knowledge.

[6] His revision would seem, from allusions in *Ep.* lxxi. 5, xxvii. 3, *Catal.* 135, to have been extended to the entire New Testament. He was also pursuing his

The preface of this edition was addressed to Damasus, and at the end of the Gospels Jerome printed the Canons of Eusebius to prevent the repetition of similar variations hereafter. He also drew up from the Septuagint the edition of the Psalms which is known as the Roman Psalter,[1] translated the Homilies of Origen on the Canticles,[2] and wrote a number of letters, among which are preserved three to Paula, two to Eustochium, and sixteen to Marcella. He began, but did not finish, a translation of the book of Didymus on the Holy Spirit. In addition to these he wrote his controversial treatise against Helvidius, in support of the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mary.

Helvidius was not a writer of much importance. He was a layman, and Jerome in his lordly way calls him a rough and ignorant person, so obscure that though he was then living in Rome, he did not know whether he was white or black. He writes as though he considered that to answer him at all was a superfluous condescension.[3] Some of the arguments of Helvidius were precisely those which have been sufficient to convince a large number of the ablest modern critics, as well as many readers who take Scripture in its natural sense. The view of Helvidius was also that of Tertullian, though he was so stern and ascetic, and perhaps of Victorinus of Pettau;[4] and the authority of Irenaeus on the other side is not decisive.

Gennadius expressly says that Helvidius was actuated by an honourable motive.[5] He shared the belief which is now held

own private studies, and was specially engaged on a comparison of the Hebrew original with Aquila's version. At that time he thought very highly of Aquila as "non contentiosus" (*Ep.* xxxvi.), but at a later period he calls him "contentiosus" (*Ep.* lvii. 11), and contradicts the former praises.

[1] The revision of the Psalter which he made at Bethlehem was accepted in the sixth century by Gregory of Tours, and is known as the *Gallican* Psalter.

[2] *Praef. in Hom. Orig. in Cantic.* "Origenes quum in ceteris libris omnes vicerit, in Cantico Canticorum ipse se vicit." Rufinus naturally referred to expressions like these when Jerome, terrified by the mere possibility of a suspicion of heresy, had become a fierce opponent of the Origenists.

[3] He hesitated to answer him, "ne respondendo dignus fieret qui vinceretur." But he does not, as Gennadius does (*De Script. Eccl.* 33), call him an Arian, or an imitator of Symmachus.

[4] Jerome denies this.

[5] Gennadius, *De Virr. ill.* 32, "religionis studio." Ambrose (*Sermo de virgin. perpet.*) and Epiphanius (*Haer.* 78) had written against the Antidicomarianites who held the views of Helvidius. They explain Matt. i. 25, "Knew her not *until*" to mean that Joseph did not know the secret of the Virgin's birth, until! Jerome at least knew better than this. Augustine puts the Antidicomarianites 84th in his list of heretics, but it is probable that so far from being heretics they merely protested against the unwarrantable *cultus* of the Virgin Mary, and

in all the Reformed Churches, that the laudation of virginity, and the comparative contempt for marriage, were extravagant and unscriptural. But the excellence of his motives did not save him from being refuted by Jerome in the tone of unchristian ferocity with which religious discussion has in all ages made us so familiar. He ridicules the style of Helvidius —which had nothing to do with the subject—and tells him that he is a barren tree, at whose roots the Gospel axe shall be laid, and which, with its unfruitful leaves, shall be delivered to the flames; that he who has never learnt to speak may learn at length to hold his tongue.[1] "You have set on fire," he exclaims, "the temple of the Lord's body; you have polluted the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit." The deplorably unfair caricature of family life which Jerome draws in this pamphlet shows how little he knew of the infinite sanctity of true homes, while the remark that he praises conjugal life because it begets virgins,[2] illustrates the utter extravagance of his perverseness. Whatever may be thought of his arguments, his scornfully contumelious style must be infinitely distasteful to all who believe that even "orthodoxy" furnishes no excuse for unholy bitterness. Jerome, who had become a monk to subdue the passions of the flesh, does not seem to think it any harm to indulge himself to any extent in the passions of the mind. In this, as in all his polemics, he gives full reins to envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. At the close of his treatise he seems to show "the least little touch of shame," but it instantly disappears. "I have played the rhetorician," he says, "and have sported a little in declamatory fashion. You, Helvidius, have compelled me; you who in the full splendour of the Gospel maintain that virgins and married women are equally glorious. And since I think that, overcome by the truth, you will take refuge in detraction of my life and in abuse (just as silly women do, who, when their lords get the better of them, wish them ill in the corner), I tell you beforehand that your calumnies will be my glory, since it will be the same mouth which disparaged Mary which will lacerate me, and the Lord's servant will experience your currish eloquence equally with His mother."

especially against the superstitions of the Kollyridians, who worshipped her. Bonosus, Bishop of Sardica, agreed with Helvidius; the bishops of his province only condemned him because Pope Siricius pressed them to do so. The Eastern Church has always shown a wise indifference to such questions.

[1] *C. Helvid.* i. [2] *Ep.* xviii.

Jerome's sensitive and ungenerous suspicion seems to have been quite groundless. The unfortunate Helvidius paid the penalty of not swimming with the stream. Whatever ground for criticism may have been furnished by the manners of Jerome, the taunts against him did not come from Helvidius. The honesty of that unfortunate writer had drawn down on himself a torrent of malediction, and he made no reply.

During the earlier years of Jerome's stay in Rome his name was in every mouth. The world admired his versatility, his learning, his vegetarian diet.[1] He was strong in the admiration and protection of Damasus, whose views on all important topics coincided with his own. His pale ascetic face, his body attenuated by fasting, made men look up to him as a saint, and they also praised his humility and his eloquence.[2] Wealthy persons sent amanuenses from a distance to copy out all his works.[3] His popularity was universal, and he was openly named as the fittest successor to the chair of St. Peter.[4] The applause of the world, the dazzling dream of ambition, were not likely to diminish either the elation of his mind or the bitterness of his language. A very short time served to change the popularity into hatred, and to dissipate the delusive dream.

Even at the time that men were kissing Jerome's hands many of them were using against him the viper's tongue.[5] It was not long before he was destined to feel the full weight of accumulated hatred.

The exaggerated enthusiasm of his monastic proclivities, and his constant use of unguarded expressions, combined with his whole manner of life to surround him with jealousy and suspicion. To the Pagans the proclamation that perfect Christianity was unattainable except by unnatural asceticism, which, in their opinion, "devoured widows' houses" and trampled on all the most sacred affections, was not likely to be otherwise than repulsive. Even to many Christians it seemed that monks and hermits were laying on men's shoulders burdens which Christ and His Apostles had never laid, and which they were unable to bear. They refused to accept, under the guise of an infallible exegesis, the commandments and doctrines of men. Others who

[1] *Ep.* xlv. 5: "Ego *faba* ventrem impleo."
[2] Id. "Me macies delectat et pallor."
[3] *Ep.* lxxv. 4.
[4] Id. xlv. 3. "Totius in me urbis studia consonabant. Omnium poene judicio, dignus summo sacerdotio decernebar."
[5] *Ep.* lxxv. 2

were less sincere seized their opportunity. They began to criticise Jerome's looks, his way of laughing, his very walk. They said that his apparent simplicity was hypocritical. They whispered all sorts of calumnies about him. They called him a turncoat, a slippery person, a favourite of the ladies, a man on whose word no reliance could be placed, a man who deceived others by Satanic arts; and they insinuated even worse charges than they openly ventured to make.[1]

Some were alarmed and offended by his admiration of the already calumniated Origen. He had spoken of him in the warmest terms, calling him by the name *Chalchenterus*.[2] He had quoted approvingly the estimate of Didymus, who placed him next to the Apostles, and had said that he surpassed all others. He had written a list of his works to Paula; and while he admitted that the city of Rome condemned him, he said that this was "not because of the novelty of his doctrines, *not because of heresy, as mad dogs now pretend against him*, but because they could not bear the glory of his eloquence and of his knowledge, and while he spoke all were considered dumb."

The religious world was turning against Jerome. Even his revision of the Latin versions of Scripture, necessary and useful as it was, and though it had been undertaken at the command of Damasus, excited against him a fierce and unreasoning odium. Christians found themselves suddenly robbed of many of their favourite phrases, which, however erroneous, were endeared to them by long association. He knew the danger when he undertook the task, and was quite aware that ignorant fury, preferring its old *mumpsimus* to the new *sumpsimus*, would charge him with forgery, sacrilege, and misinterpretation.[3] Everything turned out as he had feared. A chorus of opponents accused him of setting himself up against the authority of the ancients and the opinion of all the world. He was not likely to win kinder attention by calling them in reply "two-legged asses, in whose ears he would blow with a trumpet"; or by bidding them drink, if they preferred it, of their muddy rivulets, rather than of his wave of a most pure spring.[4] "A lyre," he says, "is of no use to a donkey; but that they may not, in their usual fashion,

[1] Damasus, that "virgin doctor of the virgin Church," who so warmly adopted Jerome's views about virginity (*Epp.* xxii. xlviii.), suffered nearly all his life long from similar accusations, equally false. See the *Libellus precum* (*ad init.*).

[2] See *supra*, i. 292.

[3] *Praef. in quatt. Evv.* 1.

[4] *Ep.* xxvii. 1.

accuse me of pride, I reply that I am not so stupid, nor of such crass rusticity (which they take for the only piety, calling themselves disciples of fishermen, as though ignorance were the proof of sanctity), as to have thought that any of the Lord's words were either to be corrected, or were not divinely inspired." This style can hardly be called conciliatory; and he says that Marcella (to whom he is writing) would like to stop his mouth with her hand. Yet, he asks in reply (with reference to another charge against him), is he not to dare to say what others do not blush to do? Every one, he says, scowls at him, and points at him merely because he had said that virgins ought to be more frequently with women than with men.

But this last remark—which cost him so much enmity that he quotes the words, "They that hate me are more than the hairs of my head"—was felt to be a reflexion on the Roman clergy. Truly he did not spare that body of presbyters and deacons, infallible as their theology was supposed to be. He revelled in the mordant satire which had gained him the fame —unfortunately not quite displeasing to him—of a new Lucilius.[1] Had Jerome restrained his license of speech, as Marcella wisely wished him to do, he would have been a happier and a not less useful man. It is difficult for us at all to understand such extravagant dithyrambics in favour of an unmarried life, which among ourselves is an everyday result of mere economic prudence;[2] but even these are excusable in comparison with immoderate abuse and unchristian satire.

The chief offence had been given by the too-famous letter to Julia Eustochium, the daughter of Paula, written A.D. 383, on the preservation of virginity. It had created an outburst of indignation which was far from unnatural. Many rightly considered that it was discreditably extravagant in tone; that it fostered excessive and dangerous tendencies; and that some of his expressions might almost be condemned as blasphemous.[3] But besides all these serious defects of his treatise (for such the

[1] *Ep*, cxxvii. 1: "Ubi illa quondam petulantia in qua *multo* sale orbem defricans, Lucilianum quidpiam retulisti." Comp. lxxxiv. 2.

[2] Robertson, *Church History*, i. 325.

[3] How easily the writers of this century fell into these revolting improprieties, fostered by misuse of the Canticles, we see from the shocking expressions of Paulinus of Nola: "Illum amemus quem amare debitum est. Illum osculemur quem osculari castitas est. Illi copulemur cui nupsisse virginitas est."—*Ep.* iv. *ad Sulp. Sev.* What could be more monstrous than for Jerome to call Paula "a mother-in-law of God," because Eustochium was a virgin!

letter is), Jerome had run riot in the sarcastic eloquence of universal denunciation.

After confirming Eustochium in her vow of virginity, and comparing her to Lot leaving Sodom, he warns her of all the dangers which would assail her, and narrates with singular explicitness his own carnal temptations in the desert of Chalcis. He bids her to practise total abstinence, because wine inflames the passions,[1] and to fast, as a safeguard of modesty.[2] He then proceeds to sketch various classes whom he had seen at Rome, and whom he holds up as terrible warnings.

1. He says that all virgins are not to be trusted. There are multitudes of bad virgins who *daily* fell away—stars above whom the proud enemy reared his throne.[3] He speaks of babes killed in the mother's womb that these pretended virgins may not be brought to shame, so that they are trebly guilty; they are adulteresses from Christ, they slay their infants and themselves. He describes them as saying, "All things are pure to the pure," giving the name of Manicheans to all whom they saw pale and sad; inviting followers by the glance of their eyes, wearing thin purple robes, letting their tresses fall loose over their shoulders, walking with lax knees in gay attire.[4]

2. He passes a terrible judgment on the *Agapetae*—"sisters," who, in the nominal devotion to Christian work, assumed a license monstrous in itself, and giving rise to inevitable suspicions.[5]

3. He gave yet more deadly offence by telling Eustochium to avoid the company even of matrons.[6] She was to recognise her superiority to them with a holy pride, and not to be a spectator of their matrimonial dignity, as they sat amid their crowds of eunuchs, glittering in gold-embroidered robes.

4. She is to avoid widows, who, as they lolled in their litters, surrounded by a menial and mutilated train, seemed with their plump faces and red cheeks, rather to be seeking husbands than

[1] This gave offence. *Comm. in Gal.* l. iii. p. 508.

[2] Here is a specimen of Jerome's emphatic and picturesque, but far from dignified style: "Non quod Deus universitatis Creator et Dominus, *intestinorum nostrorum rugitu, et inanitate ventris, pulmonisque delectetur ardore*, sed quod aliter pudicitia tuta esse non possit."

[3] *Ep.* xxii. 13: "Quot *quotidie* Virgines ruant." The fact should have warned Jerome not to push his views too far.

[4] It is strange that the class of nominal virgins should have been so large if Eustochium was the first virgin of noble rank at Rome, id. 15.

[5] Id. sec. 14: "Unde in Ecclesias Agapetarum *pestis* introiit?"

[6] Id. sec. 16: "Nolo habeas consortia matronarum."

to have lost them.[1] Their houses are full of flatterers, full of banquets. The clergy kiss them on the head, and hold out their hands towards them, not to bless but to receive gifts. It makes them all the more proud to think that priests need their aid. They prefer the freedom of widowhood to the restraint of marriage, and while they are called "chaste" and "nuns,"[2] they first enjoy a "dubious supper," and then dream of the Apostles.[3]

5. Nor does he spare other female ascetics who put on the semblance of self-denial. They speak in small, thin voices, and pretend to be weak through fasting, so that they cannot even walk without leaning on others. Directly any man comes in sight they groan, and droop their brows, and veil their faces, all except one eye. They wear dark robes and girdles of sackcloth, and do not wash their hands or feet, while all the time their stomach—which can't be seen—is feverish with food. Others dress in male attire, blush to have been born women, cut their hair short, and assume the semblance of eunuchs, or, in their rough dresses and hoods, imitate owls and screech-owls.

6. But now, having scathed every class of "religious" and irreligious women, Jerome thinks that it is time to turn to men. Eustochium is also to avoid men who, in spite of the Apostle, wear long feminine locks but goats' beards, and walk without sandals to brave the cold. These are all *argumenta diaboli*, and there are two of them—Antonius and Sophronius—over whom Rome groans. They enter the houses of the nobles and mislead silly women laden with sins. Their sanctimonious look is mere hypocrisy; they fast by day and secretly gorge by night. More than this he dared not say, though he evidently implies that "he could an' if he would."

7. The clergy, again, whether priests or deacons, were not always safe companions. Some of them had only taken orders to secure easier access to forbidden pleasures.[4] Jerome sketches —let us hope caricatures—their modish dress, gross ignorance,

[1] *Ep.* xxii. 16. Comp. Chrys. *Hom.* xx.; *in Pauli ad Ephes.* v. [2] "Nonnae."

[3] "Coena dubia," Terent. *Phorm.* II. ii. 28. A supper in which there are so many dishes that you do not know what you eat.

[4] Terent. *Phorm.* II. ii. sec. 28: "Sunt alii (de mei ordinis hominibus loquor) qui ideo Presbyteratum ambiunt ut mulieres licentius videant." On the offence given by this remark, see *Ep.* xxvii. 2. But Jerome was very far from being the only person who complained bitterly of the clergy. Similar complaints are found in Basil, both the Gregories, and many others. The sect of Audians was founded by a Syrian layman, about 330, as a protest against the immorality, avarice, and extravagance of the clergy.

parasitical meanness, insidious arts, hypocritical sanctimoniousness, and scandalous libertinism. He does this with the keen wit of an Erasmus and the vigorous coarseness of a Luther. His pictures remind us of Molière's *Tartuffe* and Pascal's *Provincial Letters*.[1] He says that the only care of these clerics was about robes, and perfumes, and well-fitting shoes. Their hair hung in curls, and was rolled up at the top; their fingers sparkled with rings, and they walked on tiptoe to avoid the puddles; they were more like spouses than clerks, and some of them made it their whole business to know the names, houses, and character of married ladies. These clergy remind us of the wicked and worldly ecclesiastics of the Renaissance, and certainly, if many in the Roman pastorate were like these becurled and bejewelled ladies' men, who recited comedies and sang serenades, Jerome's reaction into squalid monasticism was almost excusable.

He describes one priest in particular, the leader of the whole set. He starts out at daybreak to pay his respects to the wealthy, and almost thrusts himself upon people in their bedrooms. If he sees a cushion or an elegant napkin, or any domestic furniture, he handles and praises it, and regrets that he has nothing of the kind, till they are forced to give it him, because every one of them is afraid to offend the newsman of a gossiping society. He hates chastity and fasting; dines on the most choice dainties; talks fluent scandal in a barbarous accent; meets one everywhere and always knows and exaggerates the latest news. He drives about with such spruce and spirited horses that you would take him for a Thracian prince; withal he is as crafty and subtle as a snake. Avarice, as well as effeminate frivolity, was a conspicuous vice among many of the clergy of the fourth century. It had been found necessary to forbid by law their acceptance of legacies, and Jerome confesses with a groan that the law was necessary and wise. Chrysostom goes even further. He recommends the rich not to make the clergy their almoners.[2]

[1] See Wordsworth, iii. 123.

[2] Jerome, in his letter to Marcella, complains of the greed of some ecclesiastics whom he calls "*nummarii sacerdotes.*" He is obliged to approve of the law against mortmain, which he regards as disgraceful to the clergy, yet necessary. If we allow any weight to his strictures, we must agree with Milman (*Lat. Christianity*, i. 4) that the lower clergy were full of ambition and intrigue, and had lost the power "to command the public mind for any great salutary purpose, to repress the inveterate immorality of an effete age, or to reconcile jarring interests. In general they ruled, where they did rule, by the superstitious fears rather than by the reverence and attachment of a grateful people."

Returning to the Roman matrons, he points out that there may be a hypocritical ostentation of benevolence no less than of asceticism. When deceivers stretch out their hands to the needy, they blow the trumpet. He lately saw a very noble Roman lady (he will not mention her name), with her eunuchs around her, distributing alms with her own hand in the Basilica of St. Peter, that she might seem the more devout. She gave a penny to each poor person. Unfortunately, however, one poor old woman, clothed in rags, ran on before to get a second dole after she had received one. The pious lady-almoner observed the trick, and, when she came up to the old woman, gave her, instead of a coin, a blow so violent that it drew blood.

Such are a few of the Rembrandt-like sketches in this extremely lively, undignified, and imprudent letter. The most ordinary knowledge of the world would surely have sufficed to show the writer that it was certain to raise against him the most deadly enmities.[1] He could not plead that his duty required these witty and ruthless caricatures, in which the acid bit so deep into his page. A grave and sorrowful rebuke of the prevalent hypocrisy would have been less piquant but more effective than personal satires which scarcely rise above the level of a society journal. They must have been sore reading for the Christian community at Rome. The secret reflexions against Jerome gradually rose into a roar of exasperation. In one way or another he had offended all classes alike of the religious and of the irreligious world, and that too in the *maledica civitas*—the metropolis of false-witness. Above all, he had to brave the bitterest of known exasperations—the hatred of priests against one of their own order who had offended them. His unfortunate epistle was "stoned to death" by unanimous execration.[2] Long afterwards Rufinus reproaches him with it. "All the Pagans and enemies of God," he says, "apostates and persecutors, and all who hold in hatred the Christian name, emulously copied out this pamphlet, for the reason that it defamed every rank of Christians, every order, every profession, and the whole Church

[1] So Marcella warned him: "Scio te . . . libertatem meam rursus seminarium timere rixarum," *Ep.* xxvii. 2. Dr. Maitland (*Church in the Catacombs*, 201) says of Jerome's letters to ladies, that in them, amid very unspiritual interpretations of Solomon's Song and fulsome eulogies of nuns, the religion and the Christ of the New Testament seem missing. "The Lord of Life is departed, the grave-clothes alone remain."

[2] *Ep.* lii. 17: "*lapidato* jam Virginitatis libello."

alike with the foulest infamies." Everybody applied it to himself,[1] and it was in everybody's hands.[2] One man in particular, whom he calls Onasus, and on whom he expended some extremely coarse jokes and vituperation, made himself the mouthpiece of the general feelings, and many others echoed his slanders.[3] The Priests and the Levites, he said, all despised him, and called him a dangerous person; his only comfort is that he has the help and pity of the Good Samaritan.[4]

But before we see him yield to the storm of obloquy we must glance a little more closely at the circle of ladies among whom he chiefly lived, and at the circumstances which, in the space of three years, not only destroyed his popularity and dashed to the ground his ambitious hopes, but made Rome as intolerable to him as Stridon and Aquileia and Antioch and the desert of Chalcis had already become.

It was unfortunate for Jerome that his friends in Rome, with the exception of Pope Damasus, were almost exclusively women. With them he seems chiefly to have consorted, with them he chiefly corresponded. Among his male friends we know but four. Chief among them was Pammachius, a patrician and a former schoolfellow, who married Paulina, the daughter of Paula, and who was a brother of Marcella. The three others were Oceanus, who at a later time had the honour of Augustine's friendship, and who accompanied Fabiola to Bethlehem to visit Jerome; Marcellinus, a tribune and imperial notary of fine character and high distinction, who afterwards, by desire of the Emperor Honorius, presided at the Council of Carthage in 410, to reconcile the Donatists to the Catholics; and Domnion, an excellent and hospitable presbyter,—"the Lot of his age."[5] Jerome compares these friends to Daniel, Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, in the city which he soon learnt to detest and to call "Babylon."[6]

But the female friends of Jerome were more numerous, and we hear much more of them. Besides Melania, with whom he had been intimate in his former residence at Rome, there were Paula and her four daughters, Blaesilla, Eustochium, Paulina, and Rufina; Albina and her daughter Marcella; Lea and Asella.

[1] *Ep.* cxxx. 19.

[2] He frequently calls it "libellus," though it was in the form of a letter. *Ep.* lii. 17, etc.

[3] *Ep.* xl.

[4] *Ep.* xlv. 6.

[5] *Ep.* xlvii. 3; *Ep.* l.

[6] *Ep. ad Princip.*

Jerome's relations with these noble, learned, and saintly ladies was, it need hardly be said, absolutely innocent, though it gave rise to numerous calumnies. But his influence over them was not wholly salutary. It was tinged with one-sided conceptions of Christianity derived far more from Gnosticism than from the simple tenets of the Gospel, and only defended as an after-thought by a few expressions of St. Paul, partly misinterpreted and partly thrust out of their due perspective. Probably the reason why Jerome was surrounded by this "crowd of virgins and matrons" was because he found their enthusiastic temperaments more plastic to his views than were those of their husbands, fathers, and brothers. It would have been better if he, like Athanasius and Augustine, had found his chief friendships among those of his own sex.

It must, however, be said to Jerome's credit that he helped to bring about a great revolution. He changed, and for the better, the entire aspect of Roman society. If he gave to his female converts a too partial development, he at least drew them to lives indefinitely more noble than those which prevailed either in the Pagan or Christian society of the fourth century.

For in truth Christianity, which had won the State, was far from having won its harder and more final victory over the lives and hearts of its nominal professors. From Jerome and Paulinus of Nola, and still more from the letters of Symmachus, the history of Ammianus Marcellinus, and the sermons of St. Chrysostom, we learn the characteristics of that society. It was luxurious, selfish and immoral, and was rendered more voluptuously effeminate by contact with eastern manners. The people of Rome consisted of the dregs of all nationalities, which —to borrow the strong image of Juvenal—poured themselves into Rome as into a common sewer. Their very names were hideous. The commonest were such as *Cinessores*, *Statarii*, *Semicupae*, *Cicimbrici*, and other coarse, untranslatable nomenclature. Persons who called themselves Romans bore such designations as Gluturinus, Trulla, Lucanicus, Salsula, and Pordaca—derived from everything which was ridiculous and base. The pale and wrinkled faces of eunuchs became more and more common in the streets, and "the Syrian Orontes flowed into the Tiber" with fuller and fuller streams. The depraved multitude slept at night in the taverns, or under the awnings of the theatres, where they fiercely quarrelled with each other over their games

of dice, or about the merits of their favourite charioteers. Wine, betting, gambling, theatres, races, and licentiousness absorbed their days and nights. They were no longer content even with bread and the games of the circus, but required more liberal and more varied doles for their services as *claqueurs* in the theatres and clients in the streets. Roman patricians, descendants of the Catos and the Cincinnati, were not ashamed to assume the guise of Persian satraps, to wear thin robes of silk and linen, to surround themselves with Eastern slaves, and use fans and parasols. If a fly escaped the fan, or a sunbeam found its way through the parasol, they complained of their cruel destiny.[1] If they condescended to the fatigue of a country visit, or sailed in a gaily-painted pinnace to Caieta or Puteoli, they talked as though their exploits might be compared to those of Alexander or of Caesar. Their libraries were full of gorgeous books, but were closed as religiously as sepulchres. Their one amusement was gambling, and their sole reading was the foul gossip of calumny and lust. Their nobility seemed insignificant unless they claimed descent from Cacus and Geryon on one side, and from Venus and Anchises—to say nothing of Agamemnon —on the other. They called themselves Reburri, Fabunii, Pagonii, Tarracii, Ferrasii, and such fantastic names. And yet, as though they had been mere purse-nobles (*βαλαντιογενναῖοι*), they were always boasting of their immoderate wealth and of the ownership of estates on which the sun never set.[2] It was their special pride to have halls supported by a multitude of pillars, and built of shining marbles of many hues; but those halls echoed nothing nobler than the garrulity of society-gossips and the thinly-disguised prurience of professional jesters. So monstrous was their pride that they bent their heads ("as though they were threatening bulls," says Marcellinus) for their dependents to kiss, and held out their knees or their hands, thinking that to kiss these would suffice the vulgar multitude for all purposes of a happy life. They did not believe in the gods, yet they were so superstitious that they would not venture to bathe or to dine without consulting their horoscope, and observing what position the moon held relatively to the constel-

[1] Lucius Verus, the colleague of M. Aurelius, used to complain if a rose leaf of his couch was crumpled.

[2] Amm. Marc. xiv. 6, sec. 10: "Patrimonia . . . quae a primo ad ultimum solem se abunde jactitant possidere."

lation Cancer. They never deigned to leave their palaces, even to shop in the Forum or to visit the amphitheatre, without parading in gorgeous equipages, in which they reclined at ease, while they displayed their fringed, translucent, and many-coloured dresses by fanning themselves constantly with their left hands. Their horses were caparisoned with gold, and they were accompanied by the whole army of their slaves, even down to their buffoons. All the rougher and more stalwart varletry led the way, followed by younger and more elegantly dressed attendants carrying their wands of office. Behind the chariot walked a host of cooks and scullions mingled with a rabble of plebeian clients and promiscuous slaves. Hideous bands of eunuchs of all ages brought up the rear, and the wrinkled, distorted faces of these aged wretches excited pity and disgust. The day closed with enormous and extravagant banquets, for which fish and game were brought from the most distant regions, and which ended with pantomimic displays given by curled female dancers, and noisy concerts of harps, flutes, and hydraulic organs. The drunken degradation of these symposia is described by Ambrose with scornful plainness. The dancers and singers became so indispensable to beguile the intolerable tedium of life, that when all strangers were expelled the city during a famine a special exemption was given to three thousand of these ministers to luxury.[1]

The Emperor at Constantinople set the fashion of this boundless pomp and enormous prodigality. Julian almost alone of the Emperors had disdained the unwieldy paraphernalia of thousands of cooks, barbers, cup-bearers, eunuchs, and pampered drones of every description who filled the palace with nauseous laziness. The torpid-minded Arcadius imitated and excelled the splendour of Solomon. He was rarely visible to the multitude except when he made a state journey to the scene of his summer dissipations. He lay outstretched on richly-woven cushions in a golden chariot, surrounded with attendants carrying golden shields embossed with eyes, fanned with golden fans, and with his ears, arms, and hands loaded with golden and jewelled ornaments. His robes blazed from head to foot with precious stones, and he walked out of his palace along corridors powdered with dust of gold. The members of the imperial

[1] These particulars are all derived from Ammianus Marcellinus, xiv. 6 and xxviii. 4. See Thierry, i. 4-12.

family were pageanted about like idols; the multitude gloated on their voluptuous magnificence, and the nobles, corrupted and effeminate, emulously vied with one another in distant approximations to similar magnificence.

If such was the character and habits of the men, the women were naturally still more shameless and frivolous. They spent their time at the toilet and in aimless chatter with their slaves. They painted their cheeks and lips red with rouge, their faces and necks white with gypsum, and their eyebrows black with antimony.[1] Their hair was elaborated into a scaffoldage of curls besprinkled ("as with the fire-flakes of Gehenna," says Jerome[2]) with powdered gold, and the whole marvellous structure was surmounted by a frilled Persian head-dress. A profusion of pearls and precious stones, a golden and jewelled girdle, and gilded slippers which creaked as they walked, were necessary parts of fashionable costume.[3] They breathed around them an atmosphere of rich perfumes. In all these extravagant follies many Christian ladies shared. Even in church they wore shoes so elaborately enriched with ornaments that Chrysostom scornfully advised them in one of his sermons to wear them on their heads instead of on their heels. The favourite extravagance in dress was a thin silk tissue, embroidered, in a sort of Chinese style, with lions and bears and birds, which even attracted the notice of the children in the streets. Instead of these, the golden embroidery of ladies of fashion often represented some historic or mythologic scene, such as the loves of Venus and Adonis, or Jupiter and Europa. These, of course, could not be worn by women professing Christianity, but their robes were embroidered in exactly the same way with scenes from the Old Testament or the Gospels. Such concessions to the spirit of the world were fiercely denounced by Chrysostom and other great Christian preachers.[4]

The existence of such depraving worldliness and moral decay partly excuses the counter-impulse to extravagant asceticism.

[1] Jer. *Ep.* liv. 7, cvii. 5. He also mentions *psimmythium* (a sort of white lead), *Ep.* xxxviii. 4 (see Pliny, xxxiv. 18, sec. 56).

[2] "Cingulum . . . auro gemmisque distinctum," *Ep.* xxxviii. 4.

[3] The *creaking* of the shoes seemed to Jerome a peculiar aggravation, for he alludes to it twice: "Non habuit crispantes mitras nec *stridentes* calceolos," *Ep.* liv. 7. "Caliga . . . stridens nitore ad se juvenes vocat."

[4] Chrys. *Hom.* I. *in Matt.* See Thierry, i. 14, and the note of Valesius on Amm. Marc. xiv. 6, secs. 7-25, and Montfaucon, *Opp.* Chrysost. vol. xiii. Gibbon, v. 258-268.

Jerome may claim a large share of the credit of having caused a moral revolution in the female society of Rome. He was not the founder of the ascetic movement. The minds of Christian matrons were first stirred to longings for a purer and truer life by the famous visit to Rome of Athanasius during his exile (A.D. 340). He had been accompanied (it is said) by two Nitrian hermits, Ammonius and Isidore, and it was then first that Rome witnessed the habits of men who professed an utter contempt for all that the world held most dear. Isidore, who was only a youth of twenty, became for a time the favourite of Roman society, in which he freely mixed. The Egyptian visitors were lodged in the house of the wealthy and noble Albina, the mother of Marcella, but Ammonius, unlike his companion, lived in sombre silence, and disdained even to visit the famous scenes and monuments of the world's capital, with the sole exception of the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul. While Athanasius was in Rome he spoke frequently to Albina about the life of the desert hermits. The remarkable stories which he told deepened and rendered permanent the impression which his visit had produced. From that day forward there were thousands who looked on solitude as the highest—almost as the sole—ideal of the religious life.

The first Roman lady who drank deeply of his influence was Marcella, the only daughter of Albina. The "beloved horrors" of the desert, as Athanasius, and subsequently the Alexandrian presbyter Peter, had described them,[1] engrossed her imagination. Sprung from one of the noblest families of Rome, and remarkable for her beauty, she had been married while yet very young, but had lost her husband seven months after the marriage. From that time forth she devoted herself to a life of widowhood, and, greatly to the discontent of her mother and all her relatives, refused the earnest proffers of the wealthy Consular Cerialis, who had not only held the highest offices in Rome but was closely allied with the imperial family. She then resigned a large part of her property, and gave away her necklaces and jewels, not even retaining her gold signet-ring. The world indignantly attributed her conduct to the machinations of the clergy, and finding it impossible to escape the envenomed tongue of calumny, she bought a house and garden in the suburbs of Rome, and there lived in absolute seclusion. Finding, however,

[1] Peter visited Rome about 373 (Jer. *Ep.* cxxvii. 5) and Athanasius in 340 (see *supra*, i. 389, 390).

that her friend Sophronia could live the monastic life in the city,[1] Marcella returned to her splendid palace on the Aventine, and devoted it to the use of Christian assemblies. It became a sort of convent, in which there were daily Bible-classes and devotional meetings of patrician matrons. So eager was Marcella for Scriptural knowledge that she never saw Jerome, even for a few moments, without asking some question on the subject.[2] After his retirement to Bethlehem, whither Paula and Eustochium in vain invited her to follow them,[3] she was herself consulted as a high authority on all Biblical matters by the Roman ecclesiastics, and even by Pope Anastasius himself, whom she induced to condemn the heresies of Origen.[4] After living a saintly life for twenty-five years she met with a tragic end when Rome was taken by Alaric, and the Goths burst into her house.[5] Marcella may be regarded as the foundress of the first nunnery at Rome. It would have been happier for Jerome had he yielded to her wise entreaties that he would soften the ferocity and bitterness of his controversial invectives.[6]

Her friend Asella had been devoted to the life of a virgin by her parents in her eleventh year. Influenced by a dream, she embraced asceticism with ardour. She worked with her hands, having given away all her personal possessions, even the *murenula* —a linked and flexible necklace of gold in the shape of a lamprey —which she wore round her neck.[7] She always dressed in dark clothing, never went out except to visit the graves of the martyrs, and never spoke to a man. Her knees were as hard with praying as those of a camel. She took no food except bread, salt, and cold water; fasted constantly, and slept on the bare ground. Yet she attained the age of fifty without a day's ill-health, making of Rome her desert, and of a single cell her paradise.[8] In a city devoted to pomp, wantonness, and luxury, in which to be humble was regarded as a misery, not only did the good praise her, but even the bad did not venture to disparage a life so single-hearted. Another lady of the same views was the widow Lea, whom Jerome calls "the head of a monastery and a mother

[1] *Ep.* cxxvii. 5.
[2] Jerome addresses to her fifteen letters on Biblical questions.
[3] *Ep.* xlvi.
[4] *Ep.* cxxvii. 10.
[5] *Ep.* cxxvii. *ad Principiam Virginem, Sive Marcellae Epitaphium.*
[6] *Ep.* xxvii. 2.
[7] See Vulg. Cant. i. 10; Jer. *in Isaj. ii.* 3, sec. 18.
[8] *Ep.* xxiv. *ad Marcellam, De laudibus Asellae, Ep.* xlv. *ad Asellam.*

of virgins." The news of her sudden and early death was brought to Jerome while he was reading with Marcella the 72d psalm, and the next day he wrote a letter on the subject. He describes the death of Lea as far more glorious than that of Praetextatus, the consul-elect, who, a few days before, had been honoured with a pompous funeral. He praises her dress of sackcloth, her nights of sleepless prayer, her abstinence, her neglected personal appearance, and her serviceable humility.[1]

Another of Jerome's female friends was Melania, daughter of the Consul Marcellinus, whom we have already mentioned, but of whom he saw nothing during this stay at Rome. She lost her husband, and before he was buried two of her sons also died. "Who would not have thought," says Jerome, "that then half-frenzied, she would have rent her clothes, and dishevelled her hair, and beaten her wounded breast? Not one tear-drop flowed! She remained immovable and prostrate at the feet of Christ, as though she were grasping Christ Himself. She smiled. 'I am about to serve Thee, O Lord!' she exclaimed, 'with more activity, since Thou hast freed me from so great a burden!'"[2] Not long afterwards, leaving her young son Publicola, she went with Rufinus to spend the rest of her life in Egypt and Syria. If Lea was "the mother of monasteries," Melania may be regarded as the foundress of religious pilgrimages to the Holy Land. That those pilgrimages were anything but a source of unmixed benefit we have abundant evidence from the first, and especially in the famous treatise of Gregory of Nyssa.

Another lady of this circle, Fabiola, has earned a yet purer and more permanent fame. A descendant of Q. Fabius Maximus, and therefore belonging to the highest nobility of Rome, she had wedded a husband so intolerably vicious that she was driven to procure a divorce. She then committed what was regarded as the very serious crime of marrying again. Coming under religious impressions after the death of her second husband, she did public penance in the Lateran basilica on Easter Eve. Pagan Rome looked on astonished and indignant while, in the sight of the Pope, the presbyters and the weeping people, the noblest of patrician matrons—pale, dishevelled, unveiled, and silent—stood at the door of the basilica in the garb of a penitent, and only entered it after public absolution. Received into Church

[1] *Ep.* xxiii. *ad Marcellam, De exitu Leae.* [2] *Ep.* xxxix. 4.

communion, from which she seems to have been excluded during Jerome's stay in Rome, she devoted her whole fortune with the utmost ardour to deeds of charity. She is regarded as the foundress of Christian hospitals. She built the first Western hospital of which we hear, for which she had to borrow the Greek name *Nosokomeion*. Into it she gathered from the streets the maimed, the sick, and the starving. In a passage which reminds us of the labours of Miss Nightingale or Sister Dora, Jerome describes how she carried and tended her wounded, stricken, and leprous patients, and prepared food for these "living corpses" with her own hands. She was not content, he says, to do by proxy her duty to her neighbour. She was generous to the ascetics, the virgins, the monasteries. She clothed the naked, she fed the hungry. Rome was too narrow for her compassion. It extended to the islands, to the whole Etrurian sea, to the remotest windings of the shore. She joined Pammachius in building a hospice at Ostia, which became famous throughout the world. In 395 she accompanied her relative Oceanus on a visit to Jerome at Bethlehem. It is to her insatiable—if somewhat superficial—curiosity about matters of Scripture that we owe his letters about the dress of the High Priest,[1] and the stations in the wilderness.[2] Returning from the East during the alarm caused by the rumours of the Hunnish invasions, she died at Rome in 399, and the entire populace flocked together to do honour to her funeral. "Not thus did Furius triumph over the Gauls, nor Papirius over the Samnites, nor Scipio over Numantia, nor Pompeius over the tribes of Pontus. They had conquered bodies, she subdued spiritual wickedness. I have heard of the troops which preceded, of the multitudes which thronged to her obsequies. The streets, the porches, the roofs were insufficient to accommodate the spectators. Nor is it wonderful if men exulted over her salvation, about whose conversion the angels were glad in heaven."[3] Such was the glory of a Christian penitent!

[1] *Ep.* lxiv. *De veste sacerdotali.*

[2] *Ep.* lxxviii. *De xlii. mansionibus.* There seem to have been some intrigues to entangle her in the Origenist controversy on the side of Rufinus against Jerome (see *c. Ruf.* iii. 14). She repeated by heart to Jerome his early letter to Heliodorus (*Ep.* xiv.) The mysterious question put by Amandus to Jerome seems to refer really to Fabiola, and *possibly* implies that she was meditating a third marriage, from which she was entirely prevented by Jerome's answer (*Ep.* lv.)

[3] *Ep.* lxxvii. *ad Oceanum, De morte Fabiolae.*

Furia, a descendant of M. Furius Camillus, was also known to Jerome, and when she lost her husband he wrote her one of his characteristic letters, in which he urges her to remain a widow.[1]

But the nearest and dearest to Jerome of these female friends were Paula and her daughters, and he exercised over them an influence analogous to that of Conrad over Elizabeth of Hungary. Paula was the noblest lady in Rome. Her father, Rogatus, who was partly of Greek origin and owned an estate at Nicopolis, traced his descent from Agamemnon; her mother, Blaesilla, was a lineal descendant of the Scipios and the Gracchi. By her husband, Toxotius, she became the mother of four daughters—Blaesilla, Paulina, Eustochium, Rufina—and of a son, Toxotius. In 380, at the age of thirty-three, she was suddenly left a widow. She immediately laid aside her jewels, assumed a sort of nun's dress, and devoted herself to the service of Christ—relieving the poor, tending the sick, and causing the dead to be buried at her own cost. When reproached with wasting her patrimony, she replied "that she was leaving to her children a great inheritance, the compassion of Christ." When even Jerome begged her to put some reasonable limit to her charities, she said that she desired to be buried as a beggar, and even in a borrowed shroud. Her humility was so great that in appearance and manner she was not to be distinguished from her own servants. She slept on the ground with no other covering than rough haircloths, but the greater part of each night was spent in prayer and in an inexhaustible flow of tears, which she shed for offences which others would have deemed entirely venial. When Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, came to Rome in 382, she received him as her guest, and the stories about the hermits which she heard from him and Paulinus of Antioch confirmed her in her desire to imitate the example of Melania, and to make her home in the Nitrian desert. Her daughter Eustochium embraced all her views, and devoted herself to a life of virginity. When the girl's uncle persuaded his wife Praetextata to take away her dingy garments and array her in the costly apparel of her rank, an angel appeared to Praetextata in a dream, and addressed her in language of the sternest menace.[2] Blaesilla was married to a descendant of Camillus (a brother of Furia), and would probably have followed

[1] *Ep.* liv. *ad Furiam de viduitate servanda.* The letter was written in 394, and shows that Jerome's opinions about Rome and its clergy were still unchanged.

[2] *Ep.* cvii. *ad Laetam.*

her sister's example, but died at the age of nineteen. Paulina married Jerome's friend Pammachius, and died childless ten years afterwards. The youngest daughter Rufina, was betrothed, but died very young before her marriage. The son, Toxotius, was apparently opposed to the conduct of his mother and sisters, but he married a Christian lady named Laeta, daughter of the heathen Pontifex Albinus, and both Laeta and her daughter, the younger Paula, became devoted adherents of the monastic ideal. The dust of Jerome is mingled with that of Paula and Eustochium in their graves at Bethlehem.

Such were the Roman families, with the female members of which Jerome lived in close intimacy. The mere fact that he was thus half-worshipped by a circle of the wealthiest and noblest ladies in Rome awoke a great deal of bitter jealousy against him. The direction which he gave to their aspirations was especially odious to many of their relatives. Mothers were afraid of the influence which he would exercise in turning their daughters into nuns, just as they kept their daughters from hearing the sermons of Ambrose in Milan. The letter to Eustochium turned the Roman clergy into his deadly enemies, and the weight of odium was increased by what took place at the funeral of Blaesilla. The young widow was unlike Eustochium in character. She was naturally gay and vain. An attack of fever brought about her conversion, and she too, to the disgust of her relatives, followed the example of her sister. She was highly accomplished, and not only spoke Greek and Latin with equal beauty and fluency, but had acquired Hebrew so rapidly as almost to equal her mother in learning and singing the Hebrew psalms. A relapse brought her to the gates of the grave. The Prophets and the Gospels were always in her hands during her sickness, and her last words were, "Pray the Lord Jesus to pardon me, because I could not carry out what I wished." Paula might well be overwhelmed with grief at the death of such a daughter. Jerome reproaches her with fasting for sorrow, not for fasting's sake, and with allowing the feelings of a mother to intrude on those of a Christian and a nun. In the middle of the funeral rites she fainted away. The people, witnessing her grief, broke into furious murmurs. "She grieves," they exclaimed, "that her daughter has been killed with fastings, and that she has not married again, that grandsons might have been born to the family. How long are we to tolerate the presence of these detestable monks? Let

us stone them, or fling them into the river. They have misled this miserable matron. She could not have wished to be a nun, for she mourns over her daughter more than any Pagan mother has ever mourned her sons." At such words, Jerome writes to Paula, Christ must have mourned, and Satan exulted, and her lost Blaesilla must have been stricken with anguish to see Christ somewhat displeased with her mother. "Was it no consolation to Paula," asks Jerome, "that Blaesilla would live for ever in his writings? Could he not secure for her an immortal memory?"[1]

But in spite of his ever-accumulating unpopularity, Jerome was safe as long as Pope Damasus was his friend. Damasus reached the age of eighty, and was Pope for eighteen years. When he died in 384, a month after Blaesilla, Siricius was elected Pope, and Jerome's fortunes at once changed for the worse. Damasus had been a poet, a man of letters and of large sympathies. Siricius, on the other hand, was a narrow, haughty, and vituperative ecclesiastic, surrounded by a clique of persons who moulded his opinions for him. He was the first Pope who issued a decretal.[2] Jerome was too independent to please such a man. If he had held any regular office under Damasus it now ceased. The new Pope either disliked him, or felt that he would fatally strengthen the cause of his rival Ursinus, if he lent any countenance to a person who had made himself so entirely obnoxious.[3] Calumnies against Jerome thickened more and more, and found a mouthpiece in a man named Onasus of Segesta, whom Jerome denounces in a savage satire addressed to Marcella.[4] He complains that he could not rebuke a vice, or ridicule a folly, or so much as describe a bugbear or a screech-owl, without awakening the rancour of Onasus, who immediately assumed that

[1] *Ep.* xxxix. *De obitu Blaesillae.*

[2] Tillemont, xii. 701. It enforced "continency" on married clergy, *i.e.* that they were to live as if they were not married. His decretal was in many places rejected (see his *Ep.* x.) It was one step more in a course which caused intolerable and continuous scandals from the very first. The "sisters," "beloved," etc. (agapetae, subintroductae, etc.), were, as Jerome says, "a plague." Cyprian (*Epp.* vi. vii. had already complained of them, and they were condemned in the Councils of Eliberis, Ancyra, and Carthage. The Council of Gangra condemned their hyper-asceticism, as did the Council of Trullo (Wordsworth, iii. 104).

[3] Siricius (*Ep. ad Himerium Tarrac.* 10, 11, *Ap.* Harduin, i. 847) took a different view from that of Jerome (*Ep.* lxix. 2) about the ante-baptismal marriages of the clergy and other matters; but in his book against Rufinus (iii. 7) Jerome challenges the production of a single condemnation of him by any Pope or by any Church.

[4] *Ep.* xl.

he was being attacked. The whole "senate of the Pharisees" declaimed against him,[1] calling him a satirist, a turncoat, a slanderer, and a dangerous person. The antagonistic element in Jerome's character would have probably induced him to fight all his enemies to the last, but when Paula and his other friends were involved in the same malicious rumours with himself he decided to leave the lying city, and shake off against it the dust of his feet. Let Rome, that "purple-clad harlot,"[2] keep her avarice, her gluttony, her frivolity, her hypocritic worldliness, her scandal, her anxieties. There let the amphitheatre rage, and the circus madden, and the theatres luxuriate. The solitude and beauty of the country were better.[3] About seven months after the death of Damasus he left Rome with his young brother Paulinian and the presbyter Vincentius. He had spent but three years in the city,[4] and in that troubled, eventful period had turned his immense popularity into a universal odium. It was August, and the Etesian winds were favourable for a voyage to the East. Many monks and other friends who belonged to his party accompanied him to Ostia to see him embark. He had already cleared his character by summoning before the law courts his chief traducer, who, under torture, had confessed Jerome's innocence, and withdrawn the most specific charges against him.[5] In a letter to the revered Asella he haughtily, but with bitter sadness, challenges all the world to deny his perfect innocence, and shows that, whatever else his enemies might say to his disparagement, the accusations of immoral conduct towards the saintly circle of ladies with whom he spent so much of his time in the study of Scripture, were, on the face of them, absurd. And so, with tears in his eyes and anguish in his heart, he went on board the vessel in which he was to leave Babylon for ever, consoling himself with the thought that, if he had been compelled to bear the infamy of a false accusation, he had learnt that it is only through evil report as well as good report that the kingdom of heaven is reached. "We shall stand together," he says, "before the tribunal of Christ, and there it will be made manifest how each has lived." Some years earlier he had written to Damasus, "Among you alone is the uncorrupt inheritance of the Fathers." He was disenchanted now!

[1] *Praef. in Didymi libr.* [2] "Purpurata meretrix." [3] *Ep.* xliv.
[4] *Ep.* xlv. "Paene certe triennium cum eis vixi."
[5] *Ep.* xlv. 2: "Fatetur insontem qui dudum noxium loquebatur, et *certe veritatem magis exprimunt tormenta* quam risus."

It was not long before Paula and Eustochium followed him on his journey. Their intention had been long announced, and they utterly scorned the calumnies of a corrupt society, whether it called itself Pagan or Christian.[1]

[1] Salvian might well exclaim : "Quam dissimilis est nunc a se ipso populus Christianus." *De Gubern. Dei.*

NOTE ON VINCENTIUS.

Vincentius, a presbyter of Constantinople, seems to have been one of Jerome's most faithful and respected friends. Jerome seems first to have met him when he visited Gregory of Nazianzus. In 382 he dedicated to him his translation of Eusebius's *Chronicon*. They lived together for twenty years at Bethlehem, and seem never to have quarrelled. They had been admirers of Origen together, and together they became his detractors (*Ep.* lxxxviii. *c. Ruf.* iii. 24). In 385 they left Rome (*c. Ruf.* iii. 22), and Vincentius seems to have shared both in Jerome's asceticism and in his controversies (*Ep.* lxi. 3). We know nothing more about him.

XVI

Continued

JEROME'S JOURNEY TOWARDS THE HOLY LAND

(A.D. 385-405)

"Non Ierosolymis fuisse sed Ierosolymis bene vixisse, laudandum est."
JER. *Ep.* lviii. 2.

SECTION VI

THE journey of Jerome must have been a delightful episode in a life which had been sorely tried. He took ship to Rhegium, saw Scylla and Charybdis with an interest deepened by the tales of mythology, and sailed round Cape Malea and through the Cyclades to Cyprus, where he was the guest of Epiphanius. Thence he proceeded to Antioch, where he enjoyed the hospitality of Bishop Paulinus.

At Antioch he was joined by Paula and Eustochium. The noble Paula was a lady of a very tender heart, as was shown by the intense grief which she had shown at the death of her husband and her daughter. Yet she resisted the entreaties of all her relatives. In vain her youngest daughter, Rufina, who had been recently affianced, implored her with tears to await her approaching marriage; in vain her little son Toxotius uplifted from the shore his suppliant hands. Paula raised heavenwards her tearless eyes, and, turning her back to the shore, ignored her motherhood to prove her saintliness.[1] The first scene that woke her interest was the island of Pontia and the little cells where Flavia Domitilla, the aunt of Domitian, had been exiled for

[1] *Ep.* cviii. 6. Monastic morality differed from the Apostle in regarding it as a matter of praise to be, or to show oneself, "without natural affection."

Christ's sake.[1] She sailed to Cyprus, where Epiphanius met her. With a humility borrowed from Eastern fashions, and now frequently displayed towards religious teachers, she prostrated herself at his feet, and accepted his hospitality for ten days, which were spent in visiting the numerous monasteries which he had founded in Cyprus. Thence she sailed to Seleucia, the port of Antioch, and joined Jerome in the house of the bishop.

By this time it was midwinter, but such was the ardour of her enthusiasm, that, in spite of the intense cold and the many dangers of travel, she would not delay her pilgrimage. Abandoning the luxurious habits of her earlier years, she left the city riding on an ass. She must have been the principal person in a numerous caravan. Eustochium was accompanied by a number of young virgins, and Jerome by Vincentius, Paulinian, and a little band of monks. The whole expenses seem to have been borne by Paula with such wealth as remained to her after she had resigned the greater part of her possessions to her children and relatives. They traversed Coele-Syria; visited Berytus and the tower of Elijah at Sarepta; kissed the sands on which St. Paul had knelt at Tyre; and passed southwards through the plain of Esdraelon to Megiddo and Dor. At Caesarea they saw the house of Cornelius and the little chambers of Philip's virgin daughters, and proceeded to Antipatris, Lydda, Arimathea, and Joppa, and thence through the valley of Ajalon by the Upper and Nether Beth-horon and Gibeon to Jerusalem. There with indescribable rapture Paula saw the Cross, and the Tomb, and the Pillar of the Flagellation, and all the sacred sites and relics which even then were pointed out to Christian pilgrims. The Proconsul, in honour to her rank, had met the travellers in all his civic grandeur, and invited Paula to live in the Praetorium;[2] but she preferred to hire a humble cottage. She had not come to see Ælia Capitolina or its governor, but Jerusalem and the tomb of Christ. The whole populace of Jerusalem—which contained as motley and disreputable a mixture of inhabitants then as it has always done—was edified by the spectacle of her

[1] Comp. Ambr. *Hexaem.* iii. 5.

[2] They must surely have met and been welcomed by Rufinus and Melania at Jerusalem, where the former had built a monastery. But if so, Jerome passes the circumstance in silence. These details are drawn from Jerome's letter to Eustochium to console her for the death of Paula. It was written in 404, long before which time the friendship of Jerome for Rufinus had been changed into deadly enmity.

impassioned devotion. If Jerome and his company expected any ideal purity in the Holy City they must have been cruelly disillusioned. Gregory of Nyssa had written a treatise to discourage pilgrimages to a city which was full of heresy and avarice, of lust and blood. But to these travellers the Jerusalem of the present was a matter of indifference. They were thinking exclusively of a land

> "Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,
> Which *eighteen* hundred years ago were nailed
> For our advantage on the bitter Cross."

They believed as implicitly as the Bordeaux pilgrim in the genuineness of all the spots and relics which were pointed out to them by their guides.

Thence they passed by the tomb of Rachel to Bethlehem, where Paula reminded Jerome of his own interpretation of Ps. cxxxii. 6, "Lo we heard of him at Ephrata, and found him in the wood"—where he referred the Hebrew pronoun to Christ, not to the Virgin Mary as some had done. No place moved Paula more deeply than this. The scenes of the Nativity passed in actual vision before her gaze. "Have I," she exclaimed with a rush of joyful tears—"have I, a wretched, sinful woman, been deemed worthy to kiss the manger in which the Lord wailed as a little child? to pray in the cave in which the Virgin-mother bore the infant Lord? This shall be my rest, because it is the country of my Lord. Here will I dwell, since the Saviour chose it." "I have prepared a lamp for my Christ." "My soul shall live for him, and my seed shall serve him."[1] "Bethlehem," said Jerome, "is more august than Rome."[2] "It is the most august spot in all the world."[3]

From Bethlehem the pilgrims visited the Chapel of "the Angel to the Shepherds," and then went on to Gaza and Hebron and the Dead Sea. They visited the Jordan, went northwards to Bethel, Shiloh, Mount Gerizim, Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, and Tabor. Contenting themselves with a distant view of Mount Hermon, they returned towards Egypt, spending a month at Alexandria. In the Nitrian desert, "the town of the Lord,"[4] they were met by Bishop Isidore and "innumerable crowds of

[1] *Ep.* cviii. 10; Ps. cxxxii. 18; xxii. 31. See *infra*, p. 236.
[2] *Ep.* liv. 13. [3] *Ep.* lviii. 3.
[4] "*Oppidum Domini*," *Ep.* cviii. 14. There were about 5000 monks in this community.

monks." Paula visited the cells of the chief eremites, and prostrated herself at their feet. She was so enchanted with this glimpse of hermit life that she wished to live with her maidens among these swarms of monks. But it is probable that Jerome himself dissuaded her from this wild experiment by reminding her of the superior sanctity of the holy places. Oppressed by the burning heat of the desert, she hired a vessel and sailed from Pelusium to Maiuma, ending the long journey at Bethlehem once more.

This period of travel, and the peace from the rage of slanderous tongues and theological controversies, must have been very delightful to Jerome's vexed and weary soul. His abundant knowledge, his eager interest in all that he saw and heard, his extreme desire to seize every opportunity of gaining information from the best sources,[1] his "picturesque sensibility," his keen and flashing wit,[2] the genuine ardour and devotion of his soul, must have made him a delightful and instructive companion. To himself, no less than to Paula and his companions, the Holy Land must have seemed like "a fifth Gospel,"[3] and his unrivalled knowledge of Scripture enabled him to use the Bible as the best of guide-books. Idle amusement was his very last object. He travelled in order to learn.[4] At Caesarea, where Origen had lived in the third century, he borrowed the priceless treasure of a manuscript of the *Hexapla*, which he patiently collated.[5] At Lydda he made the acquaintance of a learned Rabbi, who afterwards gave him expensive lessons in Hebrew. At the mouth of the Nile he learnt all that could be told him about its dykes and inundations.[6] At Alexandria he spent a whole month in the company of the blind Didymus, who occupied the chair of Origen in the famous school.[7] In spite of the affliction which had befallen him as a child of five years old, he was regarded as a miracle of erudition both in sacred and profane literature. Jerome learnt more from him and from Gregory of Nazianzus than from any living teachers,[8] and esteemed him (though he was

[1] *Praef. in Paralip.*

[2] Among other passing remarks he explains that Bethphage means "domus *sacerdotalium maxillarum.*"

[3] *Praef. in Paralip.*

[4] "Discendi studio peregrinationes institutae sunt."

[5] *Comm. in Ep. ad Tit.* iii.

[6] *In Ezech. ix.*

[7] We learn this fact from a spiteful remark of Rufinus (*Apol.* ii. 12).

[8] *Ep.* lxxxiv. 3: "Quod nescivi, didici; quod sciebam, illo docente, perdidi." *Ep.* l. 1: "Gregorium et Didymum in Scripturis sanctis catechistas habui."

an avowed Origenist) no less highly than Athanasius had done in earlier days.[1] At Jerome's request Didymus wrote a commentary on Micah, Hosea, and Zechariah.[2]

It must not be supposed that there were no drawbacks to their delights. Jerome tells us that even in the holy frightfulness of the Nitrian desert he had found adders as well as monks;[3] and although he and Paula did not experience as many adventures as Melania—who in one monastery had been told that no one who entered was ever permitted to go out, and who had only been saved by Macarius from being devoured by crocodiles[4]—yet no doubt they had undergone many privations and inconveniences which would have been dilated upon at length by modern travellers. These are passed over in silence as things of no consequence, and when at last the travellers settled at Bethlehem it was with vain dreams that they would now enjoy a life of saintly quiet and unbroken peace.

[1] *Ep.* lxviii. 2; Socrates, *H. E.* iv. 25. [2] *Comm. in Zach. Praef.*
[3] *C. Rufin.* iii. 22: "Inter sanctorum choros aspides latere perspexi."
[4] Rufinus, *Vit. Patr.*; Palladius, *Hist. Lausiac.* 150.

XVI

Continued

JEROME AT BETHLEHEM

"Augustior urbe Romana . . . Bethleem."—JER. *Ep.* liv. 13.

SECTION VII

WHEN first they settled at Bethlehem in the autumn of 386, Paula and her virgins, Jerome and his monks, had to be content with very humble and insufficient accommodation.[1] Three years had elapsed before Paula's buildings were completed. They consisted of a nunnery managed by herself and Eustochium, to which two others were gradually added; a monastery over which Jerome presided; and a *Xenodochium*, or house of reception, for the swarms of pilgrims who now began to flock to the Holy Land even from Gaul, Britain, Armenia, Pontus, Ethiopia, and India.[2] All these were received freely, and the pious lady was pleased to think that if Joseph and Mary were to visit Bethlehem again they would not be left to take shelter in a stable. Her benefactions were so extensive as to leave her burdened with debt, and Jerome had to send back his brother Paulinian to Dalmatia to sell his personal patrimony in support of the monastery. It consisted of the residue of half-ruined cottages, an estate which had been already devastated by the barbarians.

Of Bethlehem Jerome gives a very pleasing description. He speaks of its overshadowing hills, its rich foliage, its shade from the heats of summer, the delightful geniality of the autumn temperature as he studiously paced the leaf-strewn walks. He describes the fields as painted with flowers in spring, and resonant

[1] *Ep.* cviii. 14: "Angusto per triennium mansit hospitiolo."
[2] *Epp.* xlvi. 10, lxvi. 14.

with the songs of birds, while in winter there was no fear of cold because the timber supplied abundance of fuel.

The noble ladies found ample occupation in Biblical studies, which included a systematic reading of the whole Old and New Testaments under the direction of Jerome. How often they met does not appear, but Jerome was in daily correspondence with them, and his letters frequently turned upon Scriptural questions. The nuns lived apart and took their meals apart. On Sundays and feast-days they went to the common church. They had six daily services, beginning in the morning and ending at midnight. In these they chanted the entire psalter, which every nun was expected to know by heart. Paula ruled her little community with a mixture of sternness and love. All offences were punished with severity, and the nuns were kept humble by strict fasting. The throngs of monks and pilgrims who were incessantly coming and going gave them much to think of in the way of management and preparation, and although the personal service of the descendants of the Scipios was not necessary, they thought it right to set the example of menial work by trimming lamps, lighting fires, shelling peas, boiling vegetables, laying tables, and handing cups. They were to be seen running hither and thither in their mean dresses; and Jerome might well assure Pammachius that if he saw them he would hardly recognise the patrician women who in former days had "breathed of Capuan odours and shone with Spanish gold."

Jerome himself was continuously employed. His study was a cave close by the Cave of the Nativity, and here at considerable cost he stored his library with all kinds of works, classical as well as sacred, but above all with the works of Origen, Didymus, Hippolytus, Irenaeus, and Eusebius of Caesarea; to which he added the works of less distinguished writers like Acacius and Theodorus of Heraclea. He pursued his Hebrew studies sometimes with Rabbi Baranina, sometimes with a Rabbi from Lydda, or Tiberias, whose instructions cost him much money, and who, to obviate the mutual jealousies of Jews and Christians, had sometimes to steal to him, like Nicodemus, by night. He was very proud of the three languages of which he was master, and if ever he flagged in his Hebrew labours his Rabbi used to quote to him a neat Hebrew rendering of

"Labor omnia vincit
Improbus."

He was sustained too by his laudable determination to meet the constant sneer of the Jews against Christian controversialists that the texts which they quoted had a very different reading and significance in the original.

Part of his day was spent in teaching his monks, and part in educating boys. For this purpose he had to resume the classical studies which he had so long abandoned, and although Rufinus charged him with perjury to his dream-oath,[1] he replied that St. Paul quoted from heathen writers, and that he was following the spiritual meaning of the law which allowed the Israelites to marry a female captive if first they shaved her head and cut her nails!

The rest of the day was given to expository studies, and an immense correspondence. Sulpicius Severus, who spent six months with him at Bethlehem, speaks of his endless controversies, and says that he was always engaged in reading or writing, and that he did not rest either by day or by night.[2] When we remember that this activity was maintained on very meagre fare and amid much ill health, our astonishment at Jerome's versatile energy is greatly increased. His food consisted of coarse bread, herbs, and water. Except in sickness, he never tasted meat or wine. On fast-days he ate nothing till after sunset, and lived in all respects as a severe ascetic. Yet he found this mode of life purely delightful, if only he could have been left in it undisturbed. He spoke of his cell as his Paradise. The letter, written nominally by Paula and Eustochium, in which they tried to induce Marcella to join them at Bethlehem, certainly breathes the sentiments of Jerome. They speak with ecstasy of the holy places, and entreat Marcella to fly from "Babylon." Palestine, they assure her, is hilly, and seated on high, and has all the greater delights of the spirit in proportion as it is free from the delights of the world.[3] In a later letter to Paulinus Jerome adopts a somewhat different tone, and quotes the words of our Lord to the woman of Samaria, "Neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem."[4]

The record of Jerome's life for some years becomes mainly a record of his literary toils. "He lived pen in hand." This early period of calm was specially fruitful. First came commentaries on Philemon, Galatians, Ephesians, and Titus, written about the

[1] Rufin. *Apol.* ii. 8.
[2] Sulp. Sev. *Dial.* i. 4.
[3] *Ep.* xlvi. 2.
[4] John iv. 21; *Ep.* lviii. 3, 4.

year 387 at the request of Paula and Eustochium. These commentaries have the same merits and defects which mark the rest of his exegesis. They are the works of a man of real genius, of astonishing erudition, and of great industry. They show quick insight except in cases where Jerome's own judgments are darkened by his timidity or distorted by his ecclesiastical prejudices. In style they are interesting and vivid. On the other hand, they are hasty and ill-considered, being dictated sometimes at the rate of a thousand lines a day. They are a compilation of many authors of unequal value and conflicting opinions, and he often incorporates with his own views those of Origen, Didymus, and others who differed from him in many essential particulars. Hence his comments are frequently superficial, and, as was his custom, he excuses himself in his *Preface to the Galatians* for often having dictated the first thing that came into his head on the ground that he had been suffering from ill health and weakness of eyesight. He fails to understand the significance for Christian history of the little Epistle to Philemon. In his grasp of the central thoughts of St. Paul's theology he falls far behind Luther, though in treating of the Epistle to the Galatians he agrees with him in isolated particulars. He is guilty of the capital absurdity of treating the dispute at Antioch as a scene got up between St. Peter and St. Paul for the benefit of the Antiochene Christians. The *Commentary on Titus* is the slightest of the four, but is remarkable for the fair statement of the original identity of "bishops" and "presbyters." The recognition of this fact brought on Jerome none of the persecutions which it cost Aerius. It is matter of everyday experience that in theology the very same thing said by one person will be received with shouts of "heresy," which is respectfully accepted when it is repeated by some one else.

Next came a *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*, his earliest exegetic work on the Old Testament, in which his knowledge of Hebrew enabled him to take a more independent line. It cannot, however, be regarded as successful. It is spoilt by the propensity to allegorise which degrades so large a part of patristic exegesis to the level of commonplace homiletics deduced from premisses which convey no such instruction. Jerome runs away, for instance, with an arbitrary fancy of Origen's that Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, and Canticles are related to each other like Physics, Ethics, and Logic; and with a groundless generalisation that

Proverbs was intended for youth, Ecclesiastes for manhood, and Canticles for age. Nothing could be less calculcated to throw any real historical light on these writings. "If two lie together," says the preacher, "then they have heat; but how can one be warm alone?" He is illustrating the blessings and advantages of society in a series of prudential maxims. What conceivable exegetic gain can any reader have obtained by a reference to Elisha laying himself on the corpse of the youth at Shunem? "Unless Christ sleep with us," he adds, "and rests with us in death, we have no strength to receive the warmth of eternal life." If this be anything better than verbiage, it is at least singularly out of place when it is passed off as exegesis. But Jerome is everywhere like himself. He foists his own thoughts on the sacred writers, and drags his friends and his enemies even into his commentaries.

Another work was the little treatise *On the Interpretation of Hebrew Names.* It was based on the previous labours of Philo, Josephus, and especially of Origen, and may have partially served its purpose as depriving the Jews of any exclusive claim to understand the meaning of the names which occur in the Bible. It will not, however, bear for a moment the light of modern criticism. Jerome's inevitable ignorance of any Semitic dialect except Hebrew and a tincture of Chaldee rendered it impossible for him to treat the subject much better than his predecessors. In the New Testament part, which was specially his own, he makes the singular blunder of trying to give Hebrew meanings to Latin names. The alternative renderings which he offers for some of the Old Testament names are as wild as Philo's. One might wonder what use there could be in the information that Rachel means "sheep," *or* "seeing the beginning," *or* "a vision of wickedness," *or* "seeing God"; and that Anakim meant "empty humility," *or* "the humble rising together," *or* "a vain answer," *or* "a necklace"! All these vague and strange guesses were, however, worked up into materials for sermons on the "mystic sense," from which the growing errors and corruptions of the Church were so largely derived, and on which sandy superstructure they were chiefly supported.

The book on *The Site and Names of Hebrew Places* was founded on the *Onomastikon* of Eusebius. Etymologically it is of no great value, but it contains valuable archaeological and geographical details.

A far more original work was the *Hebrew Questions on Genesis.* In these remarks on difficult and important passages Jerome, like Origen in his more learned works, constantly refers to the original Hebrew. He also wrote about this time his *Seven Treatises on Psalms x. to xvi.*, which are no longer extant; and he translated, with a preface, the thirty-nine homilies of Origen on St. Luke. In the preface he spoke with great contempt of Ambrose as a croaking raven, who, himself entirely dingy, laughs in marvellous fashion at the colours of all other birds. No name is mentioned, but Rufinus challenges him to deny that the insult was meant for Ambrose, "and declares that he possessed a letter from Jerome which practically proves that such was the case."[1] I have already alluded to the dislike which Jerome showed towards the great Bishop of Milan, and there is reason to fear that jealousy of a rival commentator who, like himself, had borrowed mainly from Greek sources, may have had something to do with it.

Jerome also finished his translation of Didymus *On the Holy Spirit*, and wrote the lives of the hermits Malchus and Serapion as additional contributions to a hagiography and ecclesiastical history which he designed but never completed. "I have planned," he says, "to write—if only the Lord shall grant me life and my calumniators cease to persecute me, now at least that I am a recluse and an exile—from the Advent down to the dregs of our own time, how and by whose aid the Church has been born, has grown up, has increased by persecutions, and been crowned by martyrdoms, and after she came into the hands of Christian princes, has been made greater indeed in power and riches, but less in virtues."[2] Jerome's life was prolonged, but he hoped in vain to find any respite from the strife of tongues.

The work, which for brevity's sake is often quoted as the *Catalogus*, was another useful contribution to Church literature. Suetonius, in Latin, and Apollonius, in Greek, had written brief lives of distinguished writers, and Eusebius had furnished materials for a similar work about Christian writers. Jerome was anxious to show—in opposition to Celsus, Porphyry, Julian, and other "mad dogs against Christ"—that the Gospel as well as Paganism could boast of its writers, philosophers, and orators.

[1] He only praises the book of Ambrose *De Virginibus ad Marcellinam sororem.* See *supra*, 139, 141, 177.

[2] *Praef. in Vit. Malchi.*

It is true that the sketches are somewhat meagre, and that some names of importance are omitted—as, for instance, those of Athenagoras and Hermas; but Jerome, who had not yet assumed the functions of a *malleus haereticorum*, here shows much liberality of mind. He gives to Philo, Josephus, and Seneca a place among Christian writers; and he speaks honourably of Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria, and others with whom he had many points of disagreement. He even allows a place to heretics like Tatian, Bardesanes, and Priscillian. Augustine in his criticism alludes to the omissions, and thinks that it would have been better if Jerome had either excluded all heretics or pointed out their errors. He says that the book had been given to him with the title *Epitaphium*, which Jerome rejects, and wishes the book to be called *De Viris illustribus* or *De Scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*. In a letter to Desiderius, he says that "after a catalogue of many writers, he has placed himself at the close of the volume like one born out of due time, and the least of all Christians."[1]

But by far the greatest and most permanently important work of Jerome's life was his critical labour on the Greek text of the Septuagint, and his retranslation of the whole Bible into Latin from the original languages. When he had the good fortune to find Origen's *Hexapla*—either the original or a careful copy of it by the martyr Pamphilus—in the library at Caesarea, he had not only collated it with other manuscripts, but also procured copies of the fifth, sixth, and seventh columns which contained Greek versions hitherto unknown to him. The study of these versions led him to undertake a complete revision of the then current Latin translation. He began with the Psalms,[2] and his work is now known as the *Gallican Psalter*, in which, by obeli and asterisks, he showed what the Septuagint had omitted and Theodotion had added. He then amended the Book of Job, and Augustine in his treatise on Job used this text. He must have rendered a similar service to all the books of the Old Testament, but this edition is not preserved, and indeed most of it was stolen and lost in Jerome's lifetime.[3]

These labours prepared the way for the Vulgate translation, which was first received with shouts of abuse, but which has been accepted for many centuries as the Bible of the Western

[1] *Ep.* xlvii. 3.

[2] This, with other works of Jerome, was translated into Greek by his friend Sophronius (*Catal.* 134).

[3] *Ep.* cxxxiv. 2.

Church.[1] In this work, for which he deserves an imperishable debt of gratitude, he gave to the Church the ripest fruits of those long studies in Hebrew and in sacred criticism, of which he had obtained a knowledge unsurpassed by any of the Fathers except Origen. He began with the Books of Samuel and Kings, to which he prefixed the preface known as the "Helmeted Preface" (*Prologus Galeatus*).[2] He dedicated it to Paula and Eustochium, and his enemies severely ridiculed his way of dedicating his writings to women more often than to men; a sneer which he answers by referring to the famous women of classical history and of the Old and New Dispensations. The next part of the work, which was delayed by one of his numerous illnesses, contained the three Books of Solomon, and was dedicated to the Bishops Chromatius and Heliodorus.[3] The translation of the Old Testament was not completed till the year 405, and it had occupied much of his time during no less than fifteen years, though he passes it over in half a line in the *Catalogus*.[4] His version of the New Testament was rather a critical revision than a new translation. For the Apocrypha he had but little regard, and has only rendered it hastily and in part. The Church is indebted to him for the clear insight which he showed in putting these late and comparatively valueless writings on an incomparably lower level than the canonical books.[5]

Undaunted by these labours, he undertook a commentary on the Prophets, beginning with Nahum. The prefaces to these works are full of interest, and the comments abound in critical and illustrative remarks, sometimes absurd but often very valuable. Some of the stranger allusions are probably due to his

[1] They called him a "*falsarius*" and "*sacrilegus*" (*Praef. in Evang.*) In the *Prolog. Galeatus* he speaks of "Latrantes canes qui adversum me rabido ore desaeviant," and in *Praef. in Esdr.* of "Hydrae sibilantes." But all who differed from Jerome are apt to become "hydras" and "mad dogs." In the Council of Trent the Vulgate is made the authentic Scripture: "Pro authentica habeatur, et nemo illam rejicere quovis praetextu audeat."

[2] *Praef. in Sam.* "Hic Prologus Scripturarum, *quasi galeatum principium* omnibus libris, quos de Hebraeo vertimus in Latinum, convenire potest."

[3] He calls it *tridui opus;* but it is incredible that it should only have occupied three days. The phrase must simply mean that it had been done very quickly.

[4] *Catal.* 135: "Novum Testamentum Graecae fidei reddidi." "Vetus (Testamentum) juxta Hebraicam (fidem) transtuli." It is true that when the *Catalogus* was written the work was very far from complete.

[5] He says "Non sunt in Canone." The language of our Art. VI. on the Apocrypha is borrowed from him.

Jewish Rabbis. Jerome shows repeatedly that he was free from hard and narrow theories of verbal inspiration, while he makes a popular use of the phraseology current in his day. He was thus in a better position to understand the meaning of the writers on whom he comments, though his insight as a scholar and a man of genius is often spoilt by the non-natural interpretations which he borrowed from his contemporaries. Fantastic exegesis was one of the fatal legacies of the synagogue to the early Christian Church. In the hands of the Fathers, as of the Rabbis, the words of revelation were often assimilated to the hopeless riddles of the sphinx.

NOTE ON JEROME'S TRAVELS IN PALESTINE, p. 225.

As illustrating the condition and beliefs of Palestine at the time when these Roman exiles settled in Bethlehem, we may refer to the strange spectacle St. Jerome, Paula, and their companions saw at Samaria. They were there shown the tombs of Elisha, Obadiah, and John the Baptist. By the latter tomb they saw a crowd of wild and horrible demoniacs. "*Ubi multis intremuit consternata mirabilibus; namque cernebat variis daemones rugire cruciatibus, et ante sepulcra sanctorum ululare homines more luporum, vocibus latrare canum, fremere leonum, sibilare serpentum, mugire taurorum. Alios rotare caput et post tergum terram vertice tangere, suspensisque pede feminis vestes non defluere in faciem.*" *Ep.* cviii. 13. On the latter clause see Paulinus *in Nat. Fel.* 7.

XVI

Continued

JEROME'S CONTROVERSIES

"The strife of tongues."—Ps. xxxi. 20.

"Non beata faciunt hominem secreta . . . si secum non habet solitudinem mentis."—Ivo de Chartres, *Ep.* 192.

SECTION VIII

The first twenty years spent by Jerome at Bethlehem were fruitful in other works and letters besides those which we have mentioned. In 395 he wrote a commentary on Jonah, remarkable for its full recognition of original sin and for its substitution of "ivy" for Jonah's "gourd."[1] His commentary on Obadiah was practically a retractation of an early work in which (he tells us) he had interpreted the prophet "mystically" from sheer ignorance of his real meaning. In 398 he published a brief exposition on the ten visions or "burdens" of Isaiah, and a commentary on St. Matthew, which he dictated very rapidly after a long and severe illness.[2] It is chiefly on the historic sense, but sometimes deviates into the allegorising fancies of Origen while it carefully avoids his more dubious opinions.

[1] *Ep.* civ. 5. Augustine's letter to Jerome.

[2] In this commentary he, like Hilary, almost falls into Docetism in speaking of Christ's passion. (See Dorner, *Person of Christ.* He explains the "rock" as referring to Christ and not to Peter. "Simoni qui credebat *in petram Christum.*) He interprets the "keys of the kingdom of heaven" as only conferring a *declarative* power like that of the Aaronic priest, who pronounces a leper clean after he has been cleansed. He strongly repudiates the misuse of the passage by "bishops and priests, who assume to themselves something of the pride of Pharisees; whereas God looks not to the opinion of priests but to the life of sinners."

Among the more elaborate letters of these years was one to Nepotianus on the life of clerics and monks, in which he again writes with as much severity of the clergy as he had done in his too famous letter to Eustochium. "You have compelled me," he says, "dearest Nepotianus, after the stoning of my little book *On Virginity*, which I wrote at Rome to the holy Eustochium, once more after ten years to unlock my lips at Bethlehem, and to expose myself to be stabbed by the tongues of all." He does not intend to aim at any person in particular, so that no one must be angry with him, unless he is ready to allow that "the cap fits." He cannot, however, refrain from the temptation to indulge his talent for satire, and once more he describes with stinging vividness the avaricious rapacity, the vanity, the dissoluteness, and the hypocrisy of some presbyters and monks whom he has known.[1] The early death of Nepotianus called forth a beautiful letter of consolation to his uncle Heliodorus, for Jerome was sincerely attached to the youth, and had been specially touched by the legacy of some clerical vestment which Nepotianus had bequeathed to him on his death-bed.[2] He also wrote three letters to the celebrated Paulinus, afterwards Bishop of Nola.[3] In one of these we trace the results of a quarrel with John, Bishop of Jerusalem, in the slighting manner in which he speaks of the pilgrimages which he had once so ardently extolled; in another he refers Paulinus to the writings of Origen and Tertullian, for the answer to some difficult Biblical questions. He wrote to Furia urging her to remain a widow; to Pammachius, "On the best method of translating"; and letters of consolation to Theodora and Salvina, and to Oceanus on the death of Fabiola.

Meanwhile trials of various kinds came upon him. His health was much broken, and he had a severe attack of fever. The advancing irruption of the Huns filled all minds with disquietude. In 395 he writes to Oceanus that the whole East was trembling with the news that swarms of these wild horsemen had burst from the shores of the Sea of Azov and the icy Don, and were scouring many lands on their swift steeds, filling the world with massacre and terror. The Roman army, occupied in the civil war of Theodosius against Arbogast and Eugenius, had left Italy and northern Africa denuded of protection. These Huns were already besieging Antioch. Tyre had taken refuge in her island. Rumour said that they intended to storm

[1] *Ep.* lii. [2] *Ep.* lx. [3] *Epp.* liii. lviii. lxxxv.

Jerusalem in the hopes of treasure, and the walls of Jerusalem were in ruins. Jerome had been compelled to keep vessels in readiness at Joppa for his monks and nuns, in order to fly if necessary, since storm and shipwreck were less to be dreaded than these barbarians. In 396, in closing his letter to Heliodorus, he consoles him for his nephew's death by pointing to the perils and miseries of life in those days. Here Jerome recounts some "strange stories of the deaths of kings" which had recently occurred. The Arian Emperor, Constantius, while advancing against his enemy Julian, had died in an obscure village. The apostate Julian felt in Media the power of the Christ whom he had denied in Gaul. Jovian, after barely tasting the sweets of empire, had been stifled with the fumes of charcoal.[1] Valentinian had burst a blood-vessel in his rage against the Sarmatians for devastating Illyria. His brother Valens had been defeated and burned to death in Thrace. Gratian, betrayed by his army, had suffered a foul captivity and a miserable end. Valentinian the younger had been murdered after many misfortunes, and his body hung on a gibbet. And people of lower rank were equally wretched. For more than twenty years the Roman Empire had been deluged with blood by hosts of barbarians. Matrons, virgins, bishops, priests had been insulted and slain. Churches had been destroyed, and horses stabled at their altars. The relics of martyrs had been dug up. The Roman world was rushing to ruin. The East had hitherto escaped; but now, not from Arabia, but from the farthest rocks of the Caucasus, the wolves of the North had been let loose upon it. Monasteries had been sacked; rivers had been dyed with blood; crowds of men had been dragged into captivity. Even a Thucydides and a Sallust would have been stricken dumb at such calamities.

But Jerome's severest trials arose neither from illness nor from the dread of public calamities. He could not keep himself out of the region of controversy, by which he was grievously agitated and in which he always shows his worst side. As often as not he was entirely in the wrong; nearly always in his methods, frequently in his conclusions, and sometimes in both alike. He was, however, of an argumentative disposition, and any opposition to his favourite errors roused his combative propensities as the sound of a trumpet rouses a war-horse.

[1] Amm. Marc. xxv. 10, secs. 12, 13. Comp. Julian, *Misopogon*, p. 341. On the whole paragraph see *supra*, i. 422; ii. 131.

I. There lived at Rome a monk of independent mind named Jovinian. His character seems to have been entirely blameless. At one time he practised all the forms of asceticism which were popular in his day. He dressed in a single rough tunic, lived on bread and water, and even went about with bare feet. His opinions on the necessity of these practices underwent the same change as those of Luther a thousand years later, but he never married, and we have nothing but the savage taunts of Jerome on his corpulence and his rubicundity to make us believe that he plunged into the opposite extreme of gluttony and luxury. Accustomed to think for himself, he embraced similar views to those of Helvidius, and refused to accept the false tradition which was gradually but surely imposing on the necks of Christians a yoke more severe than that which even the Jews had been unable to bear. In many respects Jovinian, like Helvidius and Vigilantius, was a Protestant before his time, and he also fell into some of the errors of Protestant sectaries. Personally we know but little of him. His portrait has been drawn exclusively by his enemies, and is in all probability a shameless caricature. Jerome describes him as "that fellow, that beautiful monk, fat, sleek, clothed in white, and always stalking about as if he were a bridegroom." He calls his followers "the throng of Aristippus—the fat, the sleek, the curled, the beautiful—all who part their hair carefully, and go about with rosy cheeks." "All these," he says, "are of your herd, or rather grunt among your swine." He describes him as "our Epicurus wallowing"—the word is too coarse for literal translation—"in his own little gardens among young men and young women." He calls him "the Epicurus of Christians, a most voluptuous haranguer, a slimy serpent, and our Proteus." This is only Jerome's ferociously eloquent way of saying that he disagreed with him; and, since he is unable to accuse him of a single specific fault, the fact that the very same charges had been falsely urged against himself ought to have checked his slanderous tongue. A man who could habitually sink into such a style as this ought not to have felt surprised if men called him "a calumniator." It is no excuse for Jerome that men who professed and called themselves Christians have in every age thus revelled in malediction, and thought to supply by vituperation the lack of argument.

If Jovinian's own works had come down to us, or if any friend had told us his real manner of life, we should be enabled

to judge of him more fairly. Jerome treats him *de haut en bas* as if he were some noxious insect, but the specimens which he quotes of his reasoning do not justify the tone of contempt which he adopts. Jovinian, in point of fact, was in the right in many of the views which most excited Jerome's fury. Both of them indeed slid into the falsehood of extremes. If Jovinian sometimes used almost the language of an Antinomian, Jerome used almost or quite the language of a Manichee.

There is a beautiful passage in one of Cardinal Newman's writings in which he tells us that he had himself been taught from bitter experience the duty of accepting with caution the misrepresentations of party abuse.[1] He is now universally extolled. But the days were—and not so very long ago—in which

> "The man that mentioned him at once dismissed
> All mercy from his lips, and sneered, and hissed."

And in those days, he says, he learnt to think that if he, who was entirely assured before God of his own sincerity and innocence, could be painted in such odious colours, might it not be the case that others, whom we only know from the slanders of their religious opponents, may have been true children of God? Who would judge of Origen from the execrations of a Demetrius or a Theophilus of Alexandria, or from those who consigned his soul to eternal torments? Who would judge of an Athanasius from the charges heaped upon him by Ursacius and Valens and John Arcaph, and accepted even by Eusebius of Nicomedia; or by the condemnation of the majority of bishops at the Councils of Tyre, Milan, Antioch? Is our estimate of Chrysostom to be derived from a Severus of Gabala, or even from an Epiphanius? Is any partisan so sunk in prejudice as to judge of Luther from the calumnies of Romish scandal-mongers; or of Baxter from the curses of Judge Jeffries; or of Wesley and Whitefield from the High Church sermons of their day? To these saints of God it matters little what theological fury and falsehood may say of them, but it behoves all who fear to offend the God of Truth to judge righteous judgment, and not to defile their own

[1] "I have been honoured and obeyed,
I have met scorn and slight;
And my heart loves earth's sober shade
More than her laughing light."
Humiliation (*Verses*, p. 113).

souls with the congregated vileness of ecclesiastical calumny. Jovinian had the misfortune to be in many points before his time in his efforts to stem the rushing tide of error and corruption. A man had little chance of fairness whom Siricius anathematised (A.D. 389), whom Ambrose drove from Milan,[1] whom Augustine condemned, and whom Jerome overwhelmed with rage and scorn.[2]

Jerome, in his three books against Jovinian, charges him with asserting four errors, viz.—

1. That virginity, widowhood, and marriage are in themselves indifferent, being each alike pleasing to God.[3]

2. The possible sinlessness of those who have been truly born again in baptism.[4]

3. The equal moral validity of fasting and thankful enjoyment of food.

4. The equality of the future rewards of those who are saved.[5]

To these Augustine adds that Jovinian also taught

5. That all sins are alike.

6. That when Christ was *born*, though not when He was *conceived*, the Virgin ceased to be (corporeally) a virgin.

With the two latter views we are not here concerned. Jovinian wrote various little treatises, and these points did not occur in those which Pammachius sent to Jerome.[6] The first of the two (5) was derived from Stoic teaching, and was exactly one of those errors into which a bold but inconsequent thinker of no great intellectual power might easily fall. The second (6) is a

[1] Ambrose (*Ep.* lxiii.) severely condemned two monks, Sarmatio and Barbatian, who held the same views; but they were crushed and calumniated rather than confuted. See *supra*, 129.

[2] Siricius, *Ep. ad div. Episc. adv. Jovin.* (*ap.* Ambros. *Ep.* vi.); Ambrose, *Ep.* 25, and *Ep.* 7, *ad Siricium;* Augustin. *De Haeres.* 82, *Retractt.* ii. 22. (See Zöckler, pp. 195 *sqq.*; Gieseler, i. 75 (E.T.); Lindner, *De Jovin. et Vigilant. purioris doctrinae* 4 *et* 5 *saeculo antesignanis.*)

[3] Jer. *c. Jovin.* i. 2. Augustine (*De Haer.* 82) says that in consequence several aged virgins married; and he wrote his *De bono conjugali* to prove that Jovinian could be refuted without disparaging marriage.

[4] "Qui plena fide in baptismate renati sunt a diabolo non posse subverti" (id.) "Posse hominem baptisatum, si voluerit, nequaquam ultra peccare" (Jer. *adv. Pelag.* ii.)

[5] Cave says (*Lives of the Fathers*, ii. 411), "Methinks had he taught no worse than this he had not deserved so loud and severe an outcry to be made against him."

[6] Perhaps they were only mentioned in conversation, "Remanserant . . . in quorundam sermunculis et susurris" (Aug. *Retractt.* ii. 22).

point which it is degrading to discuss and almost impossible to explain. It ran counter to the then current dogma that the Virgin continued to be a virgin not only *ante partum* but *in partu et post partum.*[1] It has nothing to do with the opinion of Helvidius that our Lord's brethren were really His brethren, but with a superfluous and invented miracle for which there is not the shadow of any authority in Scripture, which only touches on external questions supremely unimportant, and almost offensively irreverent to any sober mind.[2]

As regards the first point—the equal sanctity of marriage and celibacy before God—Jovinian was absolutely in the right according to the final judgment of all the Eastern and of all the Reformed branches of the Church. His views were at least free from the dangerous effect of drawing a distinction between higher and lower standards of morality in things perfectly innocent. Nothing but harm resulted, or could result, from leaving on the minds of Christians the impression that they were guilty of dereliction and doomed to inferiority if they lived amid the duties and relations to which they had been called by the Providence of God. Except in fantastic perversions of the Song of Songs, which tells when rightly understood in the very opposite direction, there is not one syllable in the whole Old Testament which sanctions that exaltation of virginity which was a fundamental article of monkish morals. The whole of the New Testament—even the direct and repeated teaching of St. Paul[3]—is entirely in the same direction except a few hesitatingly-expressed and profoundly-misinterpreted phrases, for which the Apostle disclaims any Divine authority, which are contradicted by advice given in other passages, and which, at the most, are given as suggestions suitable for temporary emergencies.[4] Augustine, in his book *On the Blessing of Marriage*, admitted all that Jovinian's position required when he said that a man like Abraham might be absolutely pure and continent though married. Chrysostom himself had said much the same as Jovinian, for he said, "Enjoy the married state with due moderation and *you shall be first in the kingdom of heaven, and entitled to all its blessings.*"[5] Jovinian had simply been disenchanted by experience, just as

[1] See Ambr. *Ep.* xlii.; Aug. *c. Julian. Pelag.* i. 2.

[2] It was preposterously supported by Ezek. xliv. 2 (Aug. *Enchir.* 34).

[3] Eph. v. 28-33; 1 Cor. vii. 2, 7, ix. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 2, 4, 12-16; iv. 1-4; Titus i. 6; comp. John ii. 1-11, Heb. xiii. 4, etc.

[4] In 1 Cor. vii.

[5] Chrys. *Hom.* vii. *Heb.* sec. 4. See similar passages in Neander, iii. 360 (E.T.)

others were, and he saw that the exaltation of an ideal which was only possible for the few became a source of demoralisation for the many.[1]

In the whole of his first book against Jovinian Jerome shows his worst defects. He begins with abusing the barbarisms of Jovinian, his "most filthy style," and his unintelligible method of reasoning; and he proceeds to the Scriptural establishment of his own views in a series of unblushing sophisms. A single text, "A bishop must be the husband of one wife"—against the simple clearness of which he writhes in vain—is enough to scatter all his plausibility to the winds. What are we to think of a controversialist who can quote such a verse as Matt. xxiv. 19 as a condemnation of marriage? or could any one but a mediaeval monk repeat with satisfaction the disgraceful remark that St. Peter "washed off the filth of marriage in the blood of martyrdom"? An earlier Father—Clement of Alexandria—says that to disparage wedlock is to disparage the Apostles. Not only was Peter married, but Philip gave his daughters in marriage. He even thinks that St. Paul was married, and that in the word "yokefellow" he refers to his wife.[2] He said that every one, whether presbyter or laic, had a perfect right to marry with innocence. Jovinian had tradition on his side, and Scripture[3] and the authority of the entire Church of early Christianity. The holy confessor Paphnutius, in the Council of Nice, though himself unmarried, had saved the clergy from a yoke which he declared to be intolerable, by asserting that marriage was chaste and honourable and a Divine ordinance. For three centuries the ambition of priestcraft had not tampered, even in the Western Church, with that indefeasible and holy right granted to all men by the primeval ordinance of God. The Eastern Church to this day has remained free. Athanasius, whose authority is incomparably higher than that of Jerome, had said to Dracontius that nothing prevented the right of a bishop to marry if he chose. Compulsory celibacy at once caused the immeasurable scandal of the *subintroductae*, and a state of things denounced by Father after Father as nothing better than a secret and criminal con-

[1] See Neander, iii. 357, 372.

[2] Clem. Alex. *Strom.* iii. 6, §§ 52, 53. See Cotelerius, *Patr. Apostol.* ii. 241; Bingham, Bk. iv.; Basnage, *Dissert.* vii.

[3] Jovinian quoted Gen. ii. 24; Matt. xix. 5; 1 Tim. ii. 14, v. 14; Heb. xiii. 4; 1 Cor. vii. 39. If his exegesis was very much at fault in some points, he was no worse in that respect than his opponents.

cubinage which had to be coped with—and that in vain—even by imperial laws.[1] Jerome himself is one of the strongest witnesses of the existence of the evils to which the prevalence of views like his had largely contributed. In point of fact, his mind was unphilosophical, and he never grasped Jovinian's central position that the power and work of Christianity depend not on external conditions but on its influence upon the temper and the heart.

Jovinian, like some sects of Quakers and others, held that perfect sinlessness was obtainable after baptism. He quoted in favour of his own view the verse of St. John, "He that is born of God doeth no sin," which Jerome met by the verse of James, "In many things we all offend." If Jerome had taken the other side we can see how overwhelming a case he might have seemed to make out by insisting on the ideal propositions of the fourth Evangelist. He failed to see that Jovinian was thinking of the *inward life*, which he believed to be supported by indefeasible grace. It is astonishing how, in days when most Christians had adopted the dogma of verbal dictation, they could make anything of arguments in which it was so easy to oppose texts by other texts, which, if we are content with the mere words, express the opposite. The natural result was a boundless casuistry shocking to every independent mind. The reason why Scriptural arguments in the controversies of those days were so unsatisfactory, was because many more centuries of slow learning were to elapse before the Church arrived at the conception of the Old Testament as a fragmentary and progressive revelation. Ages passed before interpreters fully learnt the absolute necessity of taking into consideration the context, the times, the circumstances, the relative proportion, the historic origin and primary meaning of each separate passage. And, as regards the *theoretic* possibility of sinlessness after baptism, Augustine himself had at one time admitted the same thing.

As to the third point, the views of Jovinian and of Jerome were both partial. Fasting is nowhere distinctly enjoined in the New Testament as a Christian duty.[2] On the other hand, the voluntary use of fasting under certain circumstances is

[1] If any one desires to find damning and overwhelming evidence against the compulsory celibacy of the clergy he will find it *ad nauseam* in Henry Wharton's *Treatise on the Celibacy of the Clergy*, ed. 1688, and in H. C. Lea's *Clerical Celibacy*. The judgment of our Church is clear (Art. XXXII.)

[2] Jovinian quoted the example of Christ and His disciples; and Rom. xiv. 20, 1 Tim. iv. 3. See *supra*, 169.

perhaps implied. Unquestionably fasting has often been thrust into dangerous prominence. It has been forgotten that it acts differently upon different temperaments ; that to some it renders the Christian life more difficult. To regard fasting as intrinsically pleasing to God—to look upon it as an end rather than as a means—to adopt that monkish view of corporeal observances which Jerome had made it no small object of his life to teach—is to run counter not only to the letter but to the whole spirit of the Gospel dispensation, as well as to the direct example of Him whose glad innocence and festal geniality had earned Him from sour externalists the slander of being a glutton and a wine-bibber.

The fourth point—the equality of future rewards—is purely speculative. Here too much of Jerome's reasoning is sophistic, but he is probably in the right. The view of Dante is however sufficient to reconcile the conflicting arguments. When Dante asks Piccarda who is in the lowest sphere of beatitude—

> "Long ye for a higher place,
> More to behold, and more in love to dwell?"—

he is told in reply that all are equally happy, because all are absolutely resigned to, and at one with, the will of God—

> "Then saw I clearly how each spot in heaven
> Is Paradise, though with like gracious dew
> The Supreme virtue showers not over all."[1]

After Jerome had poured out his wrath against his opponent with great prolixity, he ends with a highly rhetorical appeal to Jovinian not to lead his herd of swine down a steep place into the sea to perish in the waters. "Rome," he says, means "fortitude, whereas the name of Jovinian is derived from that of an idol. Let Rome therefore beware of Jovinian!"[2]

This wretched conceit was not however the end of the controversy. Jerome's astonishment that any one should dispute the popular opinion on points which he regarded as axiomatic, led him into a violence and extravagance which disgusted even his friends. He had said in his book that "he knew many matrons would rage against him, and with the same impudence with

[1] *Parad.* iii. 63-90.

[2] Du Pin will not call Jovinian a heretic, as we only know him through his adversaries (iii. 89).

which they despised their Lord, would be frantic against him, a mere flea, and the least of Christians." But he could hardly have anticipated the outcry which his book caused even among those who were favourable to his views, and by whom the "horrific treatise" of Jovinian had been rejected. Some monk at Rome, on whom Jerome pours out the vials of his abuse as "a vulgar gadabout and slanderer," made harangues against him, and "with canine tooth gnawed, tore, and rent his book." Jerome sneers at this person as a nobody in comparison with himself; he insinuates that the man was guilty of all sorts of nefarious practices in the company of virgins and wives; and he challenges him to publish an answer to the books against Jovinian if he dared.[1] But Jerome's dearest friends—even Domnio, to whom he writes with extreme respect—even Pammachius, the son-in-law of Paula, whom he calls "the most noble of Christians, and the most Christian of nobles," were shocked and offended by his disparagement of marriage. Pammachius went so far as to buy up all the copies he could, in order to prevent the discredit which such a book would bring on Jerome's name. Domnio took the trouble to write out all the inculpated passages, and to beg him either to retract or to defend them. From Jerome's replies to both it is evident that he could not help feeling a touch of shame. His letter to Domnio is a continuous denunciation of his unnamed Roman detractor, and he ends with the petulant remark, "I do not condemn nuptials, I do not condemn the wedded state. And, that he may know my opinion more exactly, I wish all to marry, *who, possibly because of terrors in the night, cannot sleep by themselves*"! To Pammachius he wrote a more serious letter, and a formal apology, which does not greatly improve his position. He thanks Pammachius for his friendliness in endeavouring to suppress the book, but tells him that it is useless—"nescit vox missa reverti." "I am not so fortunate," he says, "as most pamphleteers of this period; I cannot revise my trifles as I could wish. Directly I have written anything, my lovers or my enviers with equal zeal, though with different objects, disseminate my thoughts to the multitude, and are excessive alike in their praise and in their blame."[2] He stakes his defence on the one passage of St. Paul,[3] and on the manner in which it had

[1] *Ep.* 1.

[2] This seems to be borrowed from a remark of Origen, *Homil.* xxv. *in Luc.* See *supra*, i. 304.

[3] 1 Cor. vii. 33-40.

been interpreted by many Greek writers from Origen downwards; among others by Pierius, who even goes so far as to say "In speaking thus Paul distinctly preaches celibacy." In his *Apology* he reasserts his position. He denies any Manichean tendencies, and declares that he has never disparaged marriage except in comparison with celibacy. After adducing his Scriptural arguments, such as they are, he falls back on the bad position that it is one thing to argue and another thing to teach; one thing to write controversially, and another to write dogmatically. He refers to the answer of Origen and others to Celsus and Porphyry, as a proof that absolute sincerity is not necessary in arguing.[1] He even ventures to urge the example of St. Paul, who, he says, in his Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, and especially to the Romans, is so absorbed in his argument that he practically applies passages of the Old Testament in a manner quite different from their original meaning.[2] He even defends himself by the example of Christ, who spoke in parables! "It is one thing," he says, "to teach a disciple, another to conquer an adversary." This doctrine of a *falsitas dispensativa* was one of the deadliest errors of many Fathers. The whole apology is replete with similar misrepresentations. From 1 Cor. vii. 5 he argues that married life is incompatible with prayer, and therefore *a fortiori* with the Holy Communion. He has no conception of any higher object of marriage than carnal gratification. He defends his inference that the work of the second day of creation was not pronounced good, because it prefigured marriage, and repeats that it was only the unclean animals which went two and two into the Ark. In all this we have a deplorable specimen of Scripture misinterpreted to suit the increasing aberrations of ecclesiastical tradition.

Of Jovinian nothing more is known. He probably died

[1] *Ep.* xlviii. 13: "Quia interdum coguntur loqui *non quod sentiunt sed quod necesse est.*"

[2] The passage is remarkable: "Paulum Apostolum proferam, quem quoties-cumque lego, videor mihi non verba audire sed tonitrua; Legite Epistolas ejus . . . et videbitis eum in testimoniis quae sumit de veteri Testamento *quam artifex, quam prudens, quam dissimulator fit ejus quod agit.* Videntur quidem verba simplicia et quasi innocentis hominis et rusticani; et qui nec facere nec declinare noverit insidias; sed quocumque respexeris fulmina sunt. . . . Calumniemur ergo illum, atque dicamus ei Testimonia quibus contra Judaeos vel caeteras haereses usus es, *aliter in suis locis, aliter in tuis Epistoli sonant.* Videmus exempla captiva servire tibi ad victoriam, quae suis in voluminibus non dimicant." *Ep.* xlviii. 13.

about 408. One story says that he was beaten with *plumbatae* (scourges loaded with lead) by order of Honorius, and then banished to Dalmatia; but Jerome says, in his coarse way, that "he belched out rather than breathed out his life amid swine's flesh and pheasants," which probably means that he died peacefully in his bed.

II. A still more bitter and widely-extended controversy destroyed Jerome's peace of mind for many years.

He had been from early youth an ardent admirer of Origen. He had at great expense bought all his books. He owed to his *Hexapla* the impulse towards revision and translation which was the most fruitful work of his life. He had rendered many of his homilies into Latin, and had made his name familiar in the West. The best part of his commentaries (as he considered) had been borrowed from Origen, who had taught him the method on which they are based. His knowledge of exegesis had been largely derived from Greek Origenists and from personal acquaintance with men like Didymus the Blind and Gregory of Nazianzus, who regarded Origen with warm admiration. He was aware that Origen had adopted some opinions on the salvability of the devil and the prae-existence of souls which the Church in general had rejected.[1] But then it was freely admitted that not a few of the ante-Nicene Fathers had been innocently heretical, because they lived before the days of theological definition. Hence in speaking of Origen, as he had often done, with the most glowing admiration, Jerome had not always thought it necessary to remind his readers that there were some points on which he was regarded as a heretic. Further than this, he had reproduced without any warning some of his most questionable views. In using the works of a man whom the most orthodox writers regarded as unsurpassed in genius and knowledge, he had only done what had been done by Victorinus of Pettau, Hilary of Poictiers "the Father of Orthodoxy," and even Ambrose of Milan. Origen had now lain for 140 years in his grave. His writings had been used by all classes throughout the East, and were fast being introduced into the West. Half the sermons of the day were borrowed, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly,

[1] That "Universalism" was *not* one of the opinions which councils condemned in Origen I have shown, decisively as it seems to me, in *Mercy and Judgment*, pp. 298-360. See *supra*, i. 316-321.

from the thoughts and methods of Origen. Jerome had never anticipated that this was the region from which would rise some of the most violent storms which troubled his hermit life.

Such, however, was the case. Few persons are more mischievous than gratuitous heresy-hunters and "other people's bishops";[1] and this was exactly the character of those who stirred up this needless tumult. As far back as 393 a certain Aterbius, of whom little or nothing is known, came to Jerusalem as a self-constituted censor and loudly incriminated Jerome and Rufinus for holding Origenistic heresies. Rufinus treated this meddler with the austere disdain which marked his character. He said nothing, but shut himself up in his monastery and refused so much as to see his censor. "Aterbius," says Jerome, "was barking against you at Jerusalem. If he had not quickly gone away he would have felt the stick—not a literary stick—but that with which it is your habit to beat off dogs." Jerome was too sensitive to take refuge in this haughty reserve. If there was one thing about which he was nervous, it was a charge of heresy. If the Inquisition had been flourishing in full vigour he could hardly have been more terrified by the suspicion of holding anything which ran counter to the current orthodoxy. He immediately published a disclaimer of all sympathy with Origen's heresies. Towards the close of his stay in Rome he had written to Paula that the senate of the Pharisees, and rabid dogs in general—a very favourite expression of his—barked against Origen as a heretic out of their envy and jealousy at the glory of his eloquence and knowledge.[2] Henceforth he adopted to the full the sentiments of those "*rabidi canes*."

This was but the beginning of a miserable story, more or less discreditable to every person concerned in it, which lasted through a period of five years (399-404), and left its bitter consequences for many more.

The name of Origen had always been loved and honoured in Jerusalem, and he had warm supporters in John, Bishop of Jerusalem, as well as in Rufinus. Both Rufinus and John were confessors, for they had both been imprisoned by the Arian Valens for the sake of the Nicene faith, though in the mean spirit of a partisan Jerome tries to throw doubt upon the fact.[3]

[1] 1 Pet. iv. 15: ἀλλοτριοεπίσκοπος.

[2] *Ep.* iv. See *supra*, i. 307.

[3] *In Ruf.* ii. 3.

The monks of the Nitrian desert, among whom John had lived, were also Origenistic in their general sympathies.

The monks of the Sketic monasteries, on the other hand, were in deadly hostility to the spiritualism of Origen, and being mostly men of great ignorance had adopted a crude anthropomorphism to such an extent as to accept literally the expressions of Scripture about the finger or the foot of God. And among these monks Epiphanius had lived.

Epiphanius, who became Bishop of Salamis in Cyprus in 369, prided himself on being "a hammer of heretics." In 380 he wrote a book called *Panarion*, which was intended as an antidote against all heresies. Among the eighty heresies anathematised in this book the sixty-fourth place was occupied by Origenism. Epiphanius had brought with him from the Sketic wilderness a special hatred against the views of the Alexandrian teacher. He, too, was the style of man whom St. Peter calls "another people's bishop."[1] He was more than eighty years old, and it was intolerable to him that any one, however learned or however holy, should in the smallest matter hold any opinion which differed from his own. Hearing that John and Rufinus were adherents of Origen, he left his diocese to sow fruitful seeds of discord and misery in the diocese of Jerusalem. He was received with hospitality by the bishop, and repaid him by preaching a sermon against him in his own church. Nominally, indeed, the sermon was aimed at the errors of Origen, but every one present understood it to be intended as a condemnation of John. Jerome describes the bishop and his clergy contracting their nostrils, scratching their heads, and looking at each other with canine gape and shakings of the head to indicate that the aged preacher had lost his senses. At last the scene became so intolerable that John sent his archdeacon to Epiphanius with a demand that the sermon should be brought to a close. As they left the church, the people, who regarded Epiphanius as a saint, crowded round him, kissing his feet, plucking his fringes, and offering him their little ones to bless. Vexed

[1] A story is told of him which shows that he was not incapable of juster views than those which he usually expressed. When visited by Hilarion, the hermit, he offered him some fowl, which Hilarion declined on the plea that he had tasted no flesh since he was a monk. "And I," said Epiphanius, "since I was a monk, never allowed any one to lie down with a grievance against me" (*Vitae Patr.* v. 15; comp. Cassian, *De Coen. inst.* v. 27). But others must have interpreted what was "a grievance" somewhat differently from Epiphanius himself.

at this adulation, John charged Epiphanius with doing his best to encourage manifestations which were far from displeasing to his senile vanity. At the next opportunity, John, wrought by these incidents into a strong passion, preached a sermon at Epiphanius which was nominally aimed at the materialism of the Anthropomorphites. At the close of this sermon Epiphanius got up and declared that he quite approved of all that John had said, but that it was equally necessary to condemn the dogmas of Origen. It does not seem to have occurred to either bishop that it might have been better to preach simple Christ to simple men, and to provoke each other to love and good works, instead of exacerbating against each other the mutual furies of ignorance and animosity. Epiphanius, however, was the aggressor, and the worse offender of the two.

Highly perturbed by what had taken place, Epiphanius went to Bethlehem and expressed his regret that he had communicated with John and his clergy. The monks, greatly to their credit, entreated him to return to Jerusalem and be reconciled with the bishop. Epiphanius did indeed return, but left the city at midnight, and persuaded Jerome and his community to break off communion with John, Rufinus, and the Church of Jerusalem. Soon afterwards a strange scene took place. Paulinian, Jerome's young brother, had gone on some business to Epiphanius at the monastery which he had founded near Hebron. Owing to the difference with John, the monks at Bethlehem had no means of attending the Lord's Supper, for though Jerome, Vincentius, and three or four others of their number, were presbyters, they had "out of reverence and humility" refused to fulfil their proper functions. Paulinian was known to dread ordination, but as Epiphanius wished his adherents to have a regular presbyter he ordered his deacon to seize Paulinian by force, to hold his mouth that he might not abjure them not to ordain him, and to ordain him first deacon and then priest *per saltum*. This gross irregularity, by which Epiphanius without any warning ordained a presbyter who had not yet reached the canonical age of thirty, in defiance of John, and in John's own diocese, brought about a violent rupture between the two bishops and their respective adherents—Rufinus and the Jerusalem clergy on the one hand, and Jerome and the community at Bethlehem on the other.[1]

[1] John declared that Epiphanius had never privately spoken to him on the charge of his Origenism, and that Epiphanius had promised not to ordain any

When Epiphanius had returned to Cyprus he wrote an urgent letter to John, begging him, as he loved his salvation, to recede from the heresy of Origen and "from all heresies, O most beloved, for I see that all your indignation has been aroused because I said to you, 'You ought not to praise the father of Arius, and the root and parent of other heresies.'" Jerome, at the request of his friend Eusebius of Cremona, needlessly aggravated the existing dispute by translating this letter into Latin, and the relations between him and his bishop at last became so bad that John threatened to put his monastery under a ban, and even to banish him from his diocese altogether. Jerome declared that his Latin version of Epiphanius's letter was not meant for the public, and had been stolen from the desk of Eusebius either out of malice or by some bribed traitor. A copy of it, however, found its way into the hands of Rufinus, who immediately declared, not without good reason, that Jerome's version was unfair; that he had substituted "dearest" for "honourable," and had purposely left out the expression, "most reverend father" (*αἰδεσιμώτατον πάππαν*). To all of which Jerome could only reply by counter-recrimination, and by laying the blame on the haste with which he had translated the letter for private use. Be this as it may, Jerome certainly in this matter carried very far his principle that "there is no difference between a presbyter and a bishop." It is difficult to acquit him—and even Tillemont does not acquit him—of factious conduct.

Then another person is introduced on the scene—Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria—a bold, bad, perjured man, whose hands were alternately polluted with gold and with blood. No one of the same rank in early ecclesiastical history had a more disgraceful career of intrigue, tergiversation, tyranny, false witness, and ambition, than this exalted personage. Up to this time he was a declared Origenist, and an opponent of the Sketic monks. John therefore appealed to him, and he sent the celebrated Isadore of Pelusium to end the quarrel. Nothing, however, came of this but fresh wrangling. Then the Count Archelaus, governor of the province, intervened to heal the schism by inviting both parties to a conference. John failed to appear, and explained his absence by the sickness of some woman. Of

presbyter. Epiphanius denied both assertions, and also maintained that Paulinian had not been ordained younger than many other presbyters, and that the "old" monastery was under the jurisdiction of Eleutheropolis, not of Jerusalem.

this excuse we cannot judge, but this is how Jerome writes of it: "Is it a comedian or a bishop who thus writes—'that he cannot come that day, because some woman or other is sick'? Suppose it to be true; do you, to please a single womanling—that her head may not ache, or her stomach grow chill, or she herself suffer ennui in your absence—do you neglect the cause of the Church? . . . Archelaus wrote back that you might come on the next day or the day after if you wished.—But he was entirely oblivious of us, for the womankind had not left off vomiting!"

The dispute, to which there are many allusions in the letters of this period, dragged itself on amid these discreditable incidents till, in 398, through the kindly and placable temperament of John, a hollow reconciliation was brought about between Jerome and Rufinus and their followers at a celebration of the Holy Communion in the Church of the Resurrection at Jerusalem.

This reconciliation did but "skin and film the ulcerous place," and the quarrel soon broke out again in forms yet more virulent. For about this time Jerome wrote two bitter and angry letters against John of Jerusalem—the one to Theophilus, in which he complained of John's episcopal assumptions even against so peaceful a recluse as himself, and the other to Pammachius, known as "The Apology against John of Jerusalem." Perhaps John never saw either document, or if he did he forgave them, for from this time he took no further part in the dispute, and Jerome, Paulinian, and their community, dutifully accepted his jurisdiction. The final rupture between Jerome and Rufinus, in which they were both led to use language highly unbecoming to them as former friends, and, above all, as Christian teachers, arose from other elements in the never-ceasing Origenistic controversy. A Roman monk named Macarius, of whom Rufinus speaks with the warmest approbation, was writing a book to refute the views of the Pagans about destiny. While meditating on Divine Providence, and perplexed by the difficulties of the subject, he dreamt that a ship sailed into the haven from the open sea, which put an end to all his difficulties. At that time Rufinus arrived in Rome, and Macarius interpreted the dream as applying to the counsel which he could give. He specially asked Rufinus to set forth the views of Origen, since he was himself unable to read Greek. Rufinus said that it was a difficult matter, but so far yielded to his friend's request as to translate for him

a part of the *Apology of the Martyr Pamphilus*. The work was therefore written without the least reference to Jerome; but, in a brief epilogue, Rufinus expressed his opinion that the works of Origen had been largely interpolated by heretics. To meet the further requests of Macarius he translated Origen's four books, *On Principles* (περὶ ἀρχῶν), but assumed the right to *edit* as well as translate, omitting everything that seemed to him unorthodox as due to the tampering of heretics with the text. The result was unfortunate. The original, and the more trustworthy translation of Jerome, only remains to us in fragments, and we are unable to judge of the real nature of the work. Rufinus, however, appealed in his preface to the authority of Jerome, who, he says, had translated more than seventy of Origen's homilies, and some of his Commentaries, and who, though he had spoken of Origen with almost rapturous commendation, had ventured to smooth down everything that was heterodox. The remark was not strictly true, for Jerome had not by any means taken such liberties with his author as Rufinus did, and certainly in his version of Origen's thirty-nine Homilies on St. Luke he had left untouched not a few remarks which were accounted heterodox.[1]

There was at Rome a fervent anti-Origenistic party, headed by Jerome's friends Pammachius and Oceanus, and fired by the female zeal of Marcella. Consequently Jerome was supplied with a copy of Rufinus's translation even before it had been authoritatively published, and Rufinus believed that the copy had been stolen through the agency of Eusebius of Cremona.[2] A mild letter, which Jerome had written to Rufinus in answer to a complaint of the hostility of Jerome's friends, did not reach him till two years later; but, meanwhile, Rufinus had seen a letter of Jerome to Pammachius and Oceanus, full of complaints against his obstinate Origenism, and accompanied by a complete and literal version of Origen's work. By this time Pope Siricius had died, and Marcella, who had tried to prevent his ignorance from being sophisticated by Rufinus, was far more successful with the

[1] Du Pin (*Nouv. Bibl.* iii. 451) collected the heterodox opinions of Origen which Jerome, in his Commentaries on the Ephesians, on Nahum, on Ecclesiastes, and elsewhere, had repeated without warning or reprobation.

[2] Jer. *in Rufin.* iii. 5. 33. Eusebius seems to have been unlucky in the matter of confidential manuscripts, for Jerome accuses Rufinus of suborning a monk to steal from Eusebius a copy of his Latin version of the letter of Epiphanius to John of Jerusalem; id. iii. 4. See *infra*, p. 258.

new Pope Anastasius.[1] It is true that up to that time Anastasius (strange to say) had heard nothing whatever of Origen, and did not know who he was! Nevertheless Marcella induced him to condemn Origenism in a Romish synod, and to summon Rufinus to answer for his orthodoxy. Rufinus, who had only just returned to Aquileia after an absence of thirty years, declined to come, but he wrote to Anastasius a brief justification of his orthodoxy, and satisfied him by mentioning the points in which he considered Origen to be in error.

But Rufinus had now most serious reason to be offended with Jerome, who had tried to substitute his own translation for that of Rufinus, had spoken of him with intense bitterness, and had, through his friends, procured his humiliating condemnation by the strangely-ignorant Bishop of Rome. He considered that Jerome's repudiation of all sympathy with Origenism was insincere, or that, at the best it was inconsistent with Jerome's past opinions, and had sprung from timidity, and the habit of bowing to persons who, like Epiphanius, were regarded as pillars of orthodoxy. He had not till then discovered that Jerome was "always ready to sacrifice a friend to an opinion." He wrote two books against Jerome, which he regarded as an apology written in necessary self-defence, but which are generally known as *Invectives*. They are undoubtedly damaging to Jerome, but the sarcastic criticisms and bitter personalities in which they abound are little creditable to any Christian. His reply would have been stronger if he had confined himself to the one matter in hand and written about it with calmness and charity. Instead of this, he upbraids Jerome for many faults, and especially for bad instances of intemperate phraseology—such as when he called Eustochium "a daughter-in-law of God."

Rufinus only meant his *Apology* for his friends at Rome; but even before the book was published Jerome's partisans sent him extracts from it. Filled with fury, he at once wrote (A.D. 402) his *Apology against Rufinus*, which rendered all friendship between them for ever impossible. This counter-invective is even sadder to read than that of his adversary. In no other work does Jerome so completely reveal his inordinate vanity, his jealous envy, and his implacable wrath. A copy of this savage attack

[1] *Ep.* cxxvii. 9. Jerome, who is so eager to agree with Damasus, Anastasius, and Innocent, yet praises Marcella for opposing the views of Siricius. *Ep.* cxxvii. 9, *de Marcellae obitu.*

reached the hand of Rufinus by a merchant, whom he employed to carry back to Jerome a very brief reply, written in less than two days. To make it quite clear what he had really said, he sent an authentic copy of the book which Jerome had answered without having seen it. As to his orthodoxy, he referred to the opinions of the Italian bishops, who had declared themselves in his favour; and, finally, he so far forgot what was due to himself and his opponent as to threaten that he would reveal facts which he knew to Jerome's discredit, and would seek the protection of the law. Jerome's reply has only come to us in fragments. He begins by telling Rufinus that his letter illustrated the words of Solomon, "In the mouth of a fool is a rod of contumely." He treats the threat of going to law as though Rufinus had menaced him with the punishment of death. Bishop Chromatius of Aquileia—a friend of both opponents—had used his utmost endeavours to stop all further publication. "But this," says Jerome, "is impossible now that Rufinus *threatens me with death*." The good Bishop of Aquileia was more successful with Rufinus, who, tremendously as he had been provoked, now dropped the controversy, content—as he well might be—that though Jerome called him a heretic and heaped abuse upon him, many of the holiest bishops and Church writers of the day believed in his orthodoxy and respected his character. Chromatius, Gaudentius of Brescia, Paulinus of Nola, all honoured him. Augustine himself tried to render Jerome less unjust towards him. A century later Gennadius (*Catal.* 17) and Cassian (*De Incarn.* vii. 27) reckon him among eminent and faithful teachers of the Church, "vere sanctum et pie doctum."[1] In spite of the influence which Jerome has exercised in the Western Church, many of the Romish historians have done justice to the memory of his adversary. But from this time forward Jerome has no names for him but "the grunter," "the Cato without and the Nero within," "the scorpion," "the epicurean," "the miserable grunter," "the hydra and scorpion." Eight years afterwards Rufinus died in Sicily. But even death was insufficient to cool Jerome's burning hatred. "The scorpion"—such is the epitaph which he writes in his *Commentary on Ezekiel* of one whom he had once obligated to call "his true colleague and brother"—"the scorpion is crushed by the

[1] *Ep.* Paulin. ix. and Galla. Ser. De Pin justly gives the highest praise to Rufinus's *Exposition of the Creed* (Nouv. Bibl. ii. 403).

earth in Sicily, between Enceladus and Porphyrion, and the hydra of many heads has at last ceased to hiss against me!"[1]

And this "hydra" was the presbyter of whom Palladius speaks as a man of unequalled learning and unequalled humility![2]

[1] See *supra*, 174.

[2] Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* 118. Two theologians of Aquileia—Fontanini and M. de Rubeis—have vindicated the memory of Rufinus, and Tillemont (xii. 32), Mansi (*Bibl. Lat.* vi. 130), Vallarsi (*Praef. in Opp. Rufin.*), and others, have done him justice. Origen suffered far more severely at the hands of Jerome and the base Theophilus than Rufinus did. They are chiefly responsible for the strange ingratitude of the Church to one of her truest saints and greatest writers, whom her bishops persecuted while he lived, and cursed when he was dead. I need only refer in passing to Theophilus's synodal and paschal letter against the Origenists (which Jerome translated into Latin), nor am I here concerned with his brutal persecution of the Nitrian monks. Jerome disgraced himself yet more by turning into Latin the shameless attack of Theophilus on St. Chrysostom, whom he calls "a mad, pestilent, contaminated, furious, and insanely tyrannical person, who has sold his soul to the devil," and an "impure demon who drags along a filth of words like a torrent." And a canonised saint translated, approved, and even claimed merit for such language as this, addressed to another canonised saint by a Patriarch of Alexandria, who was perhaps the very worst man of his day! Fragments of this libel are preserved by Facundus of Hermiane, *Def. trium capitum*, vi. See Jer. *Ep.* cxiv. *ad Theophilum.*

Note on Eusebius of Cremona, p. 255.

This Eusebius is called *Bishop* of Cremona by Ceillier, but he was only a presbyter. The *Bishop* of Cremona lived in 637. Eusebius was a friend of Jerome for many years. We first hear of him at Bethlehem in 393; and many years later, Jerome, towards the close of his life, sends him his Commentary on Jeremiah, and corresponded with him about the Pelagians. *Ep.* cxliii. 2. The life of Jerome and the account of Jerome's death attributed to him are spurious.

XVI

Continued

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF JEROME AND AUGUSTINE

"When one small touch of charity
Would raise us nearer godlike state
Than if the crowded orb should cry
As those who cried 'Diana Great.'"

TENNYSON.

SECTION IX

THE controversies between Jerome and Augustine were happily far less painful than those between Jerome and Rufinus. They never personally met, but more than once it seemed probable that the relations between them would become very hostile. The letters which they interchanged show the intellectual limitations of them both; but owing chiefly to the tact of Augustine the two teachers were enabled to come to a friendly understanding. Augustine persuaded Jerome to the silent withdrawal of one error, Jerome convinced Augustine that he too ought to retract another. In both of these great men the Christian happily got the better of the religious controversialist, and the Church of God was spared one more sad spectacle of the saints of God tearing and devouring one another because they have not enough charity to forgive a difference of opinion.

The correspondence began, unfortunately, with a series of accidents. In 394, when Augustine was a coadjutor-bishop, the year before he became Bishop of Hippo, he entrusted to Profuturus a letter to Jerome, of whose fame as a scholar and expositor he had long heard, and of whom his friend Alypius, on

his return from Palestine, had spoken with warm admiration. He begs Jerome to enrich Latin literature for the use of the Church in Africa by translating works of the Greek writers, especially of Origen, to whom he so constantly refers. He dissuades him from attempting to translate Scripture from the original Hebrew, but would like him to amend the Latin version from the Septuagint with asterisks and *obeli*, as he had done for the Book of Job. If passages are obscure, Jerome might go astray in them as well as the LXX., and when they are clear the LXX. could not possibly have been mistaken as to their meaning. But above all he disapproves of Jerome's view about the dispute between St. Peter and St. Paul at Antioch as a sort of dramatic falsehood. If Jerome was really the author of that Commentary on the Galatians, he is astonished that such a man should have undertaken the patronage of a lie. He thinks that the admission of such a principle in the interpretation of Scripture will destroy all its authority. In conclusion he begs Jerome to criticise some of the works which Augustine sends him.

This letter never reached its destination, for during his journey Profuturus, its bearer, was elected Bishop of Cirta, and died shortly afterwards. It was the clear duty of Profuturus, when he failed in his mission, to write to Jerome, and to return the letter of Augustine. Instead of this, he let it become public property, and it gave rise to a rumour in Palestine that Augustine had sent to Rome a book against Jerome. All that Jerome received was a brief letter of introduction, to which he had written an equally brief reply, no longer extant.

Augustine, ignorant of the fate of his letter, was surprised at so brief an answer, and three years later (397) wrote another letter by Paulus, in which he spoke of the title of Jerome's book, *De Viris illustribus;* begged him when he mentioned heretics to point out wherein their heresies consisted; and repeated at some length his old criticism about the *mendacium officiosum* which Jerome had attributed to St. Peter and St. Paul. "I beseech you," he said, "show an ingenuous and truly Christian mixture of sternness and love, to correct and emend your work, and (as they say) *sing a palinode*, for the truth of Christians is incomparably more beautiful than the Helen of the Greeks."

This letter was as unfortunate as the former. Paulus dreaded the dangers of a voyage, and changed his plans. The letter became known alike to Jerome's friends and enemies at Rome,

but it was not till 402—five years after it was written!—that a copy of it was sent to Jerome from Rome by the deacon Sisynnius. It must be admitted that there was enough in these circumstances to cause a profound irritation. Here was a bishop, a perfect stranger, at least ten years younger than himself, writing to him in a tone of patronising superiority, criticising him without stint, and calling on him to "sing a palinode" in letters which were known to half the world before they even reached his hands! The expression "sing a palinode" was specially abhorrent to him. It was a pedantic allusion to the story of Stesichorus, who, having written a poem in condemnation of Helen, was struck blind, until he was allowed to recover his eyesight after he had written a complete retraction (παλινωδία) of his former calumnies. Augustine, it is true, never imagined that his phrase would be taken to mean that Jerome was blind! But even if he had failed to realise the touchy and suspicious character of his eminent correspondent, he showed a little want of modesty in adopting this tone towards the most eminent writer of his day. His letter was perfectly sincere; he had not meant to be disrespectful; and he could not but feel that on the main point he was in the right. Still it would have been better if he had taken pains to approach Jerome with more precaution, and to suppress the undertone of triumphant self-confidence which rings throughout his eager arguments.

The same year (402), hearing, no doubt, that Jerome had been so deeply hurt as to send no reply to his two letters, Augustine wrote a short note by the subdeacon Asterius, assuring him that it was entirely false that he had written a book against him, and that he earnestly desired to know him better. This note, written in a spirit of sincere regard, at last induced Jerome to break silence.

"Just as our holy son the subdeacon Asterius," he writes, "was on the point of starting, the letters of your Beatitude have reached me, in which you assure me that you have not sent to Rome a book against my littleness. I had not heard that this was the case, but copies have come here by our brother Sisynnius of some letter, nominally addressed to me, in which you exhort me to 'sing a palinode' about a certain chapter of the Apostle, and to imitate Stesichorus, who fluctuated between vituperation and praises of Helen, and who recovered by praises the eyes which he had lost by detraction. I frankly confess to

your Worthiness that though the style and arguments seemed to me to be yours, I still thought that I ought not to trust these copies rashly, lest perchance, if I answered you, you might be hurt, and justly expostulate with me on the ground that before I wrote back I ought to have proved that the words were yours. An additional cause of delay was the long illness of the holy and venerable Paula. For as I sat for a long time by her sick-bed, I almost forgot your letter, or that of the person who had written under your name, remembering the verse, 'Music in mourning is out of place.'[1] If then the letter is yours, write openly, or send more trustworthy copies, that we may occupy ourselves in Scriptural discussion without any rancour, and may either amend our error or show that another has vainly blamed us.

"Far be it from me to criticise anything in the books of your Beatitude. Enough for me to prove my own opinions, not to meddle with those of others. But your Prudence is well aware that each of us has his own function, and that it is boyish presumption to imitate the youths in former days in their practice of winning notoriety for themselves by attacking men of eminence. I am not such a fool as to be hurt by the difference of your views from mine, since neither are you hurt if I hold opinions opposite to yours. But between friends it is a real subject for blame, if without seeing our own scrip we study, as Persius says, the bag of others. Finally, pray esteem one who esteems you; and in the field of Scripture do not you, a youth, challenge me, an old man. I have had my day; I have run to the best of my power; now that you are running and traversing long distances, my due is ease. At the same time pardon me if I respectfully cap your poetical allusion by another, and bid you remember Dares and Entellus and the common proverb, 'The weary ox fixes his foot more firmly.' It is in a gloomy mood that I dictate this note; would that I might deserve your embraces, and that in mutual interchange we might either teach or learn.

"With his usual rashness Calphurnius, *alias* the Butcher, has sent me his invectives, and I learn that by his zeal they have also found their way to Africa. I have in part briefly answered them, and I have sent you copies of the book. I will send you the complete work when I find an opportunity. . . . Remember

[1] Ecclus. xxii. 6.

me, holy and venerable Father. See how much I esteem you in the fact that I have been unwilling to answer, even when challenged, nor will I believe that a document is yours, which in another I should perhaps blame."

In a friendly little note written to Augustine the next year Jerome commends to him the deacon Praesidius, and sends his remembrances to Alypius, without alluding to any points of controversy. Meanwhile Augustine, about the same time, not having received either of Jerome's letters, wrote once more in the kindest and most respectful tone, repeating his views about the undesirability of translating from the Hebrew rather than from the Septuagint, and enforcing them by an anecdote of an African bishop, who, in reading Jonah (iv. 6) in his church from Jerome's version, had said "And the Lord God prepared *ivy* (*hederam*), and made it to come up over Jonah." The congregation missed their familiar "*gourd*," and began to clamour aloud, the Greeks being particularly indignant, and declaring that the passage had been falsified. The frightened bishop promised that he would consult the Jews on the point, and they, either in ignorance or malice, declared that in Hebrew, no less than in Greek and Latin, the word meant "*gourd*." Consequently the bishop, after great peril, unwilling to be left without a following, was compelled to correct his error. "Whence," says Augustine, "even *I* think that, in some things, you may sometimes have been mistaken. And consider how serious a matter that is in passages which cannot be emended by comparing the testimonies of familiar languages!"

To this letter again Jerome returned a cold and displeased reply. Augustine, he said, was constantly writing and urging him to answer some letter of his which had only reached Jerome without his signature. If Augustine had sent this to him first by Profuturus and then by some one else, how came it that every one else had read it before him, and that Sisynnius had even found a copy in some island of the Adriatic? In friendship there ought to be no grounds for suspicion; but some friends of his, vessels of Christ at Jerusalem, had suggested to him that Augustine's purpose was insincere, and that he had only wished to win a little cheap and base popularity by showing off his superiority at Jerome's expense, "that many might perceive that you challenge, and I am afraid; that you write as a scholar, and I hold my tongue as a novice; and that at last

they have found some one to impose silence and a limit to my garrulity. But, to be quite plain, I did not choose to answer your Worthiness, first, because I did not quite believe that the letter was yours, nor as the proverb says of some people, '*the sword besmeared with honey.*' In the next place I was careful not to seem to answer disrespectfully a bishop of my communion, and to blame some things in the letter of my censor; especially since I judged some things in it to be heretical. . . . Finally, as I have written before, either send the same letter signed by your own hand, or cease to attack an old man lying hid in his little cell. If, however, you wish either to exercise or to display your learning, seek for youths both eloquent and noble, of whom there are said to be very many at Rome, who can and dare fight with you. . . . I, once a soldier, now a veteran, ought to praise the victories of others, not myself to be again contending when my body is outworn. . . .

"As for your denial that you have written a book against me," he continues, "how comes Italy to possess what you did not write? How can you ask me to answer things which you declare you never wrote? . . . As regards your invitation to me to criticise your own writings, I have no desire to do it, nor have I ever taken much trouble in reading them, nor are there many copies of them here. . . . Farewell, my dearest friend, in age my son, in dignity my father; and pray attend to my request that, whatever you write to me, you would take the trouble to see that it reaches my hands first."[1]

It was impossible for Augustine to read this letter without observing the wounded feelings by which it had been dictated, and in the next year (404) he wrote in the most soothing and respectful tone to apologise for the unintentional offence which he had given, and to expostulate with Jerome for remarks so full of hostility and anger. Alluding to the reference to Dares and Entellus, he says that he is willing meekly to receive any castigation which he may have deserved, and if Jerome is "a wearied ox," the weight of his foot will only serve the better to thresh out the chaff of Augustine's fault. He then refers for the third time to Jerome's views of the dispute at Antioch, about which he had, as a youth, written to him no less than ten years before without even yet having deserved an answer. The

[1] *Ep.* cv.

rest of the letter is occupied by the expression of his deep regret that two such friends as Rufinus and Jerome should now have become so notorious for their enmity as they had once been for their mutual affection.[1] In order to make quite sure that this letter should reach its destination he wrote a separate note to Praesidius, entreating him to present his letter without fail to his holy brother and fellow-presbyter Jerome.[2]

Then, at last, Jerome answered Augustine's criticisms about the title of his *Catalogus*, but especially and at full length about the dispute of the Apostles at Antioch. He begins in his usual fashion by throwing the responsibility of his opinions on Origen, Didymus, Theodorus of Heraclea, and others, but especially on Origen, whom in his brief preface he had professed to follow. But he had not, he says, expressed himself so decidedly in favour of the view that "neither had Peter done wrong, nor had Paul really blamed him," as not to leave the reader to follow another opinion if he chose. Origen had been led to his opinion by a desire to meet the sneers of Porphyry. If Peter really went astray at Antioch, he acted contrary to his professed principles; and if Paul blamed him, he was himself guilty of the same vacillation at Jerusalem and elsewhere. It is unnecessary to follow Jerome's arguments, as they are founded on the misconceptions of his Greek teachers, and are now universally rejected. He begs Augustine not to stir up against him the vulgar mob of the ignorant, who reverence Augustine as a bishop declaiming in the Church with all the dignity of the priesthood, but who think little of Jerome, now living as an old man and almost decrepit in a rustic monastery. "For to me, separated from you by such long tracts of sea and land, the sound of your voice scarcely reaches; and if you chance to have written a letter, Italy and Rome take it in hand before it is brought to me."

After explaining to him the use of obeli and asterisks in his revised texts, he deals with his untenable objection against a fresh translation from the Hebrew. He shows him how weak was the syllogism about the seventy and their translation, which he had evidently regarded as so irrefutable. He points out the need and the importance of knowing what the sacred writers really wrote, and makes a joke of the unfortunate African bishop who read *ivy* for *gourd* in Jonah. In the commentary on Jonah

[1] *Ep.* cx. [2] *Ep.* cxi.

he had explained more fully that the Hebrew word is *kikayon*,[1] which the LXX. rendered κολοκύνθη, "gourd," and Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion κισσός or κυκεών. He does not notice that it is the common fashion of Greek translators to find a Greek word which somewhat resembles the Hebrew in sound, but adds that the plant really intended was *neither* a gourd *nor* ivy, but a plant which in some respects generally resembles them.[2] The Jews, therefore, whose answer had been so nearly fatal to the poor bishop, either knew nothing about Hebrew or told lies in order to have a laugh at the votaries of the "gourd," if they said that the same word was found in Hebrew as in the Septuagint and the old Latin versions. "At the end of this letter," he adds, "I beg you not to compel an old man whose full term of service is over, to turn soldier, and again run the risk of his life. Do you, who are a youth and in the exalted rank of a bishop, teach the people and enrich the dwellings of Rome with the new harvests of Africa. It is enough for me to whisper in the corner of a monastery with poor little hearers and readers."

Feeling, perhaps, that his tone had been severe, Jerome took the opportunity a little later of writing a brief note by Firmus begging Augustine to drop all contentious questions, not to think any more about the ridiculous matter of the gourd, and not to blame him if he had answered the attack of Rufinus. Shortly after, in 405, Augustine replied to these letters with a fineness of courtesy and good feeling which left no sting behind it. He holds firmly to his opinion about St. Peter and St. Paul. His healthy moral sense could not tolerate the notion of that oeconomical falsity which some of the Fathers approved.[3] He replies ably and at length to Jerome's arguments, but he does so with great modesty of tone. He explains that in denying the charge of having written "a book" against Jerome, he drew a marked distinction between "a book" and "a letter," and entreats him not to suppose that his expressions of admiration had merely been dictated by insidious flattery. He begs pardon for and explains the innocent allusion to Stesichorus which Jerome had so much taken to heart, and once more requests him to correct any mistakes which he may have observed in his writings.

[1] קִיקָיוֹן It occurs in Jonah alone.

[2] The Talmudists said that the *kikayon* was the Egyptian *kiki*, the castor-oil plant (*Ricinus communis* or *Palma Christi*). Bochart, *Hierobotan.* ii. 273.

[3] See some excellent remarks of Coleridge in *The Friend, Ess.* v.

"For though," he says, "as a mere term of honour in ordinary ecclesiastical usage, the episcopate is superior to the presbyterate; yet in many things Augustine is inferior to Jerome; and yet even from an inferior a correction should not be shunned or disdained." He withdraws his objections to a translation from the Hebrew, as Jerome's arguments have convinced him. He ends with a frank apology for the miscarriage of his letters, about which he admits that Jerome has a fair right to complain, for he himself should not at all like Jerome's letters to become public before they reached his own hands. He pleads, however, that there should be freedom as well as charity in their friendship. If they cannot criticise each other without mutual heart-burnings, it will be better not to do it at all.

Perhaps Jerome felt the force of the last remark. At any rate no answer of his to this letter is extant. Here the correspondence closes, except that in 410 Jerome wrote a few lines to Augustine, thanking him in a general way for two books, or perhaps for two more letters, which he had received from him,[1] expressing his determination to be friendly with him; and saying that they ought both to struggle against the spread of the Pelagian heresy. In his later writings he silently withdrew the opinion which Augustine had inculpated. Each of them, therefore, had swayed the opinion of the other on points of importance; but we are forced to feel that if Augustine had entered somewhat dictatorially into the controversy, it was only his Christian kindliness which prevented it from degenerating into a wrangle as unprofitable as that between Jerome and Rufinus. The two men were unlike each other in genius and temperament. In independent scholarship, in width of reading, and in variety of attainments, Jerome was the superior; but in depth of thought and largeness of heart he was far surpassed by the Bishop of Hippo.

[1] Namely, *Ep.* cxxxii., in which Augustine asks for an explanation of James ii. 18; and *Ep.* cxxxi. *seu liber de origine animae hominis*, in which he asks how Jerome would defend against the Pelagian denial of original sin his view that each soul was separately created (*creationism*) as against the view of Augustine that souls were derived by transmission from parents (*traducianism*).

XVI

Continued

FURTHER CONTROVERSIES AND TROUBLES

"He saw
Death dawning on him and the end of all."
TENNYSON.

SECTION X

As time passed on, the life of Jerome was darkened by many sorrows. The path of his declining years was marked by the gravestones of his earlier friends. In 404 the noble Paula died after a painful illness which had lasted nearly two years. She was fifty-seven years old, and had spent nineteen years in her nunnery at Bethlehem. Eustochium was her indefatigable nurse, and Jerome consoled her closing life. Her death overwhelmed him with such deep sorrow that for some time he felt unable to resume his sacred studies. He says that when he undertook the task of writing his fingers stiffened, his hand sank listless, his intellect refused to work.[1] The funeral obsequies were conducted with unusual splendour. He describes them in the beautiful sketch of Paula's life and virtues which he wrote as a consolation to Eustochium. The bishops of Palestine, with John of Jerusalem at their head, took the bier on their shoulders and carried it to the Cavern of the Nativity. The procession was preceded by other bishops and presbyters carrying lighted torches in their hands, or leading the strains of the choir. A vast crowd of persons of all ranks followed, among whom were hundreds of monks and nuns, with many widows and poor people who had been recipients of Paula's charities. For three days the psalms

[1] *Ep.* cviii. 32.

were sung antiphonally in Greek, Latin, and Syriac, by virgins who stood around the corpse. It lay with uncovered face upon the bier, and all admired the dignity and beauty of the features, which looked like the face of some pale sleeper. After she had been consigned to her tomb in a cave close by the Cave of the Nativity, the psalms were sung for four days longer before the mourners went back to their cells. The inscriptions written by Jerome in Latin hexameters on the sepulchre and at the entrance of the cave commemorated her noble birth, her virtues, and her great self-sacrifice. Eustochium succeeded to her duties as abbess of the nunnery. Her mother left her no possessions but an inheritance of debts, the burden of many pensioners, and the light of a great example to guide her in her new duties.

It was about the time of Paula's death that Jerome began to be entangled in yet another controversy—that against Vigilantius—in which he was almost wholly in the wrong, and in which he once more indulged his passion for sarcasm and invective.

Vigilantius was born in the Gaulish city of Convennae, but his father had moved to Calagurris (now Casères in Gascoigne), where Jerome says that he exercised the tradē of a tavern-keeper.[1] Even if the charge were true, it would be no more discredit to Vigilantius than his youthful service in the Bell Inn at Gloucester was to Whitefield. As a young man he had visited Palestine, and had been hospitably received by Jerome, to whom he carried a letter of introduction from Paulinus of Nola, written at the recommendation of Sulpicius Severus, to whose household he had been attached. The visit was a source of dissatisfaction. Vigilantius and Jerome seem to have inspired each other with mutual antipathy. Jerome incessantly crossed himself,[2] but his guest saw no sign of the cross upon his speech and temper. Apparently Vigilantius talked too independently, and Jerome bade him hold his tongue about things which he did not understand. As far back as 396, Jerome, believing that Vigilantius was criticising his Origenism—a point on which he was exceedingly sore—wrote him a furious letter in which he says that, though he does not like to unlock the retirements of his cell by satiric speech, "he could an' if he would" tell a ridiculous story about him.

[1] See Lindner, *De Joviniano et Vigilantio.* Schmidt, *Vigilantius* (Munster, 1866). Gilley's *Vigilantius and his Times.* Thierry's account of Vigilantius (*St. Jerome*, ii. 46-60) is vitiated by the most transparent prejudice.

[2] "Ad omnem actum, ad omnem incessum, manus pingat Domini crucem."

This story, which he afterwards told in his book, was that one night an earthquake occurred, and Vigilantius—*being intoxicated!*—leapt out of his bed equally destitute of faith and clothing, and as naked as Adam and Eve in Paradise, remained all night praying in the Cave of the Nativity. Whatever slight foundation there may have been for this story, we may be sure that it has lost nothing in Jerome's hands, and the charge of drunkenness was probably improvised to fit in with Jerome's unworthy taunts about the supposed trade of the father of Vigilantius. "Leave sacred things alone," says Jerome;[1] "you have had a very different training from your early years. It is not for the same man to test coins and to judge of Scripture, to taste wines and to understand the Apostles. You charge me and my friends with heresy. Remember the day when you jumped up from my side, clapped your hands, stamped your feet, and shouted that I was orthodox, when you heard me preach about the resurrection of the body. When you began your voyage, and the stench of the bilgewater got into your brain, then you remembered that we were heretics. What shall I do with you? I trusted to the introductory letter of Paulinus, and mistook your madness for rustic simplicity. Leave me alone, and don't waste your money in writing books. Go to school again and learn. But of what use is it to advise you, and impose limits on one who cannot speak and will not hold his tongue? The Greek proverb is true about the ass and the lyre.[2] You ought to be called Dormitantius, not Vigilantius, for you slumber with your whole mind, and snore not so much in most deep sleep as in a lethargy." In Jerome's writings Vigilantius becomes henceforth "the snorer," as Rufinus is always "the grunter"—and *il ya des gens assez bêtes pour trouver cela amusant.*

We do not know the growth of the mind of Vigilantius or the history of his opinions. He never lost the friendship of Sulpicius Severus or Paulinus of Nola, and in their lives, as well as in the biography of Martin of Tours, written by the former, he might easily have seen sufficient proof that relic-worship, saint-worship, martyr-worship, will-worship in general, with its self-torturing fanaticism, went far to cloud men's intellects and to darken their lives. Sulpicius, for instance, was an excellent Christian, yet Vigilantius saw him "groaning over his misery and regarding himself as one who was sticking in

[1] *Ep.* lxi. 3. [2] Ονφ λύρα.

the lowest mud of hell, simply because when he had given up all his other possessions to the poor he had retained for himself one little farm."[1] If he had not seen Martin, he had heard from Sulpicius of his glorification of dirt, his squalid dress, rough hair, and imagined colloquies with angels and heathen gods and female martyrs. He saw Paulinus wrapped up in idolatry of St. Felix, staggering and constantly ill from the effects of over abstinence,[2] and gloating over fragments of the bodies (?) of St. Andrew, St. Thomas, St. Luke, St. John the Baptist, and more recent martyrs.[3] He found nothing in the Gospel to sanction such views or practices, but he saw the Gospel and every part of Scripture perverted by the grotesque misinterpretations of baseless allegory. He thought, and wisely, that a man might often serve the poor, and the Church, and the world more effectually by wisely administering his property than by parting with it; yet Jerome, after blaming Paulinus for not parting with all his wealth, seemed to turn round and say the very opposite.

In 404 Vigilantius—who has been called the Protestant of the fifth century—published a book in which, even more definitely than Jovinian before him, he endeavoured to counteract the growing corruptions of the Church. There is not the slightest proof of Jerome's assertion that he had been instigated by Rufinus to annoy him. There is scarcely a single point in which his views have not been confirmed by the ripe judgment of all the Reformed Churches. His book was a protest against the same bondage which St. Paul had repudiated in vain in his Epistles. He was an enemy, not to any single Christian truth, but solely to the ever-increasing abjectness, superstition, and reliance on outward works and conditions. To write such a book, when the whole stream of Church opinion was flowing with strong and turbid current in the opposite direction, showed no small courage and originality. Vigilantius was a thousand years before his time, and naturally excited the wrath of Jerome, who had been a coryphaeus of the corruptions which the Gaulish reformer opposed.

Unhappily the book of Vigilantius has not come down to us, and we only know it from the allusions of Jerome, which are demonstrably full of the grossest exaggerations.[4] We know,

[1] *Ep.* Paulin. ii. *ad Sulp. Sev.* [2] Id. *Ep.* vii. *ad Sulp.*

[3] Arcadius, with the whole Christian population, transferred from Palestine to Chalcedon the bones of—the prophet Samuel!

[4] As, for instance, when he charges Vigilantius with calling abstemiousness

however, that the writer protested—and rightly—against the deepening idolatry of saints and martyrs, which was even less excusable than the worship of angels;[1] against the vigils and festivals at their tombs and chapels, which, by the confession of his opponents, often led to drunkenness and immorality; against the propensity to exalt the ascetic and monastic life as the sole true form of religion; against the dangerous anti-scriptural insistence on the celibacy of the clergy; against the use of wax-lights in the daytime;[2] against the degrading cult of bones, ashes, and other relics of the dead;[3] against the extravagant importance attached to the merit to be acquired by almsgiving and fasts; against the multiplication of imaginative and imaginary miracles at dead men's tombs—in one word, against "a system of Paganism engrafted on Christianity.[4] All history as well as all Scripture proves with overwhelming demonstration that on all these points Vigilantius was right. To address prayers and supplications to dead men, and ask their intercession, is a practice which, if it be not idol-

"heresy," and chastity "a nursery of lust" (*libidinis seminarium*). What importance can be attached to the charges of a controversialist who taunts his adversary with being descended from the robbers whom Pompey had driven from Spain *four centuries* earlier?

[1] That the saints were *worshipped* by many, however much Jerome and Augustine might fail to realise the fact, is sufficiently proved by the poems of their friend Paulinus, on the "birthday" of his patron-saint Felix—

> "Felix sancte, meos semper miserate labores," etc.—*Nat.* vi.
> "Sancte precor, succurre tuo, scio proximus adstas," etc.—*Nat.* vii.

He distinctly claims ubiquity for the saints—

> "Quamvis sancti omnes *toto simul orbe* per unum
> Sint ubicunque Deum,"

and especially in places

> "Quacunque pii est pars corporis, et manus extat."—*Nat.* ix.

To Felix he attributes every blessing of his life (*Nat.* xiv.)

[2] Jerome says that the *cerei* were never lighted by day in the West, and that "*if* any one does it" allowance is to be made; but Paulinus says that at the shrine of Felix "Nocte *dieque* micant" (*Natal.* iii. 102). The Council of Eliberis decided, "Cereos *per diem* placuit in coemeterio *non incendi*"; and Lactantius denounces the practice.

[3] Hence the Christians were sometimes called *Cinerarii*—"ashes-worshippers." In estimating the "miracles" wrought by relics, it is well to remember that Chrysostom, who seems in his oration on St. Babylas to admit them, says elsewhere (*De Sacerd.* iv.) δυνάμεως τῶν σημείων οὐδ' ἴχνος ὑπολέλειπται ὁ Θεός. He alludes to the same subject, *Hom. in Matt. iv.* and *xxxiii.* Bishop Wordsworth (*Ch. Hist.* iii. 156) quotes similar testimony from Eucherius and St. Gregory.

[4] Bishop Van Mildert.

atry, is at any rate contrary to the whole tenor of revelation, and which, unless with Jerome we believe that the saints are omnipresent, is futile and absurd. Jerome himself had used language about *some* relics more contemptuous than that of Vigilantius.[1] The old festal gatherings and all-night services have been abandoned by universal experience of their peril.[2] The monastic ideal is but a very partial fragment of the Gospel ideal, though the better side of it has conferred great benefits in the past. Yet it has proved itself to be for the majority an inconceivably fertile source of uselessness and corruption. The glorification of incessant hunger and self-torture is unnatural, unscriptural, unspiritual, and un-Christlike. The celibacy of the clergy has been in age after age a deadly curse to the Church, the stronghold of ambition, usurpation, and deep-seated impurity. The adoration of relics, in itself unreasonable, has been prolific of imposture and absurdity, and was so from the very beginning. Christians in general are not called upon either to give all they possess to the poor or to hide themselves in cells. It has long been believed by many sober and devout enquirers that the vast masses of so called ecclesiastical miracles never occurred, or are of the same nature as those at Lourdes and La Salette, which are no miracles at all in the proper sense. Imaginative excitement sometimes invented the miracle, sometimes embellished, and sometimes caused it. In the practice of the vulgar, Christianity became an idolatry enriched by myths. A veneration indistinguishable, except by casuistry, from absolute worship, was paid to the souls of the departed, who were invested with all the ubiquity of God, with a more immediate effectiveness, and a more beneficent compassion.

Christianity, in some of the points against which Vigilantius protested, had undoubtedly suffered from the contact with and imitation of heathenism. "The sacrifices of the heathen you

[1] *Comm. in Matt.* xxiii. "Hoc apud nos superstitiosae mulierculae . . . *in crucis ligno* . . . usque hodie factitant." It is probable that Augustine to a great extent agreed with Vigilantius in some of his views (see *Ep.* lv. *ad Jan.*; *De Ver. Rel.* 55, sec. 108).

[2] Thus nocturnal vigils were in time prohibited, and the Council of Eliberis says, "Placuit prohibere ne feminae in coemeterio pervigilent, eo quod saepe *obtentu orationis* latentes scelera committant." Tertullian had long before asked the significant question: "Tuis nocturnis convocationibus . . . a latere suo adimi (conjugem suam) libenter feret?" (*ad uxor.* ii. 4). See Aug. *Ep.* xxii. "Commessationes et ebrietates . . . concessae putantur in honorem . . . martyrum." Comp. *Epp.* xxix. xxxiv. xxxv.

have turned into love-feasts," said Faustus the Manichean, "their idols into martyrs, whom you worship with similar devotions; you propitiate the shades of the dead with wine and dainties; the solemn days of the Gentiles you keep with them, and certain it is that you have changed nothing from their manner of life."[1] Even Augustine freely admits that by his time Christians were more overridden with ordinances than the Jews themselves.[2]

Jerome received an account of Vigilantius's book from a presbyter named Riparius, and he wrote back at once to protest against the "sacrilege." He calls "Dormitantius" a Samaritan and a Jew, who has been belching forth his impure crapulousness. He is astonished that his bishop does not check his madness. His tongue ought to be cut out by surgeons, and his insane head healed. Jerome cannot tolerate such wickedness. Oh for the javelin of Phineas, the sternness of Elijah, the zeal of Simeon the Canaanite, the severity of Peter slaying Ananias and Sapphira, the firmness of Paul striking Elymas with blindness. Let Vigilantius sleep, and while sleeping may he be destroyed with the Egyptians by the destroying angel of Egypt. If Riparius will but send this folly to him, he will lay his axe at the root of it. Amid all this abuse, the only shadow of argument consists in a few texts so sophistically misapplied that it would be astonishing if even a child could not expose their irrelevance![3]

The book was sent afterwards, and Jerome answered it in 406. His reply was written in a single night; it has been praised for its eloquence, and it seems to have terrified all who up to that time had embraced the views of Vigilantius; but it is impossible to read it without pain.[4] Vigilantius is a more portentous and pernicious monster than Cacus or Geryon, than Leviathan or the Nemean lion. Jerome seems to have thought that he made his cause stronger by saying that his opponent was a "base-born tapster," and wanted to reduce men to the condition of swine, and that he seemed to be afraid that his drinkshops would be unsuccessful if continence, sobriety, and

[1] Faust. *ap.* Aug. *c. Faust.* xx. 4.

[2] Aug. *Ep.* lv. 19. See too *De Mor. Cath.* i. 34.

[3] *Ep.* cix.

[4] Even his Benedictine editors feel that it needs an apology. Jerome abuses the style of Vigilantius, but, as Erasmus points out, the sentences which he quotes do not justify his sneers. His answer to Vigilantius (A.D. 406) appeared thirteen years after his two books against Jovinian, and twenty-two years after his letter to Eustochium.

fasting became prevalent among the Gauls.[1] His invective in this pamphlet is entirely discreditable, and his reasoning is of the most flimsy and declamatory character.

He might rage and sneer, and exaggerate, and besmirch Vigilantius with the coarsest personalities; he might materially strengthen that evil current of his age by which he himself had already been swept away; he might exult in that easy victory which may be won by any man who elects to argue in an unscrupulous style, to swim with the stream, and to veer his sails to the breeze of popular opinion. Nevertheless the voice of history, as of common sense, has recorded its decision that the "heretic" was in the right and the "Father" in the wrong. Vigilantius might have made out his strongest case from the admissions of those who so fiercely repudiated his opinions. There is not one eminent writer of the century who would not have furnished him with evidence that a compulsory celibacy had already begun to mean a scandalous license; that relic-worship had already led to the most revolting imposture; that a law of Theodosius had been required to prevent the infamy of selling as relics this or that fragment of the bodies of dead men;[2] that the birthday festivals of martyrs led to abuse, exactly resembling those which occurred at the Pagan *parentalia*. Martyr-worship and saint-worship, with the miracle-mongering to which they led, tended to the establishment among the masses of a new polytheism but little superior to that which it had superseded.[3]

One motive was alone sufficient to excuse the zeal of Vigilantius in lifting up his voice against a mass of corruptions. They were fatal to the acceptance of Christianity by the more polished heathens. Men like Julian, Libanius, and Themistius, men like Symmachus, Rutilius, and Praetextatus, were disgusted, not by true Christianity, not by the pure religion of the Gospel, but by the superstitions of sacerdotalism and the idolatry of *cinerarii*. Whoever wears "a black dress (*i.e.* every monk) is invested,"

[1] *In Vigilant.* 2, 3, 13, etc.

[2] "Nemo martyres distrahat, nemo mercetur" (*Cod.* ix. t. 17, l. 7). Augustine talks of monks who sold sham relics, *De op. Monach.* 28, 31.

[3] Aug. *De Mor. Eccl.* 34: "Novi multos esse sepulcrorum et picturarum adoratores; novi multos esse qui luxuriosissime super mortuos bibant," etc.; Aug. *in Natal. Cypr., c. Faust.* xx. 21; Greg. Naz. *Carm. de Div. Vit. gen.*, where he says that the bishops were sometimes taunted as νεκροβόροι: Paulin. Nol. *Carm.* ix.; Jer. "Si quando dies festus venerit *saturantur ad vomitum.*" See *Ep.* xxii. 17.

says Eunapius, "with tyrannic power. . . . The temples are turned into tombs for the adoration of the bones of the basest of men, whom they have made their gods."[1] Jerome's main defence is that the veneration of relics had been sanctioned by Constantine, Arcadius, the Bishop of Rome, and the bishops in general who "throughout the world reverence those relics *around which the souls of the martyrs are constantly hovering to hear the prayers of the supplicant.*"

Of Vigilantius himself we hear no more. He probably discovered that further protest would be useless. He appears to have died as a presbyter of Barcelona.[2]

The last important controversy of Jerome was against the Pelagians. Pelagius, an Irishman—or, as he was then called, a "Scot"—by birth, had been educated as a monk in the monastery of Bangor. His real name was Morgan, of which Pelagios, "connected with the sea," is only the Greek equivalent. He could speak both Greek and Latin with fluency, and even Augustine does credit to his courage, ability, and logical acumen.[3] Orosius and Jerome ridicule his corpulence and his one eye, but there must have been some charm in his society, for he won the regard of many eminent men—among them Jerome and Augustine themselves[4]—as well as of many women, whom Jerome calls his Amazons. His skill as a commentator is shown in writings, which for a long time were attributed to one or other of the most famous and orthodox Fathers. His heresies turned on subtle points of speculation about free-will and foreknowledge and original sin, respecting which it has always been difficult to arrive at rigid definitions. He himself expounded them with such caution that they shaded off under his explanations into doctrines which, under the name of Semi-Pelagian, have been held by Church teachers of unimpeachable faithfulness. Jerome himself had expressed opinions which Pelagius quoted as expressing his own views, and in spite of his zeal

[1] Eunap. *Vit. Ædesii*, p. 44.

[2] "In Hispania Barcinonensis parochiae ecclesiam tenuit" (Gennad. *Catal.* 35). Mosheim, Milner, Waddington, Milman, Gillies, and many others speak very respectfully of Vigilantius.

[3] Aug. *Ep. c. Pelagian.* ii. 31: "Homo acerrimi ingenii." For a list of his works, see Cave, *Hist. Lit.* p. 382; Gieseler, sec. 87.

[4] Aug. *Ep.* 105.

against the new sect Jerome never became a strong Augustinian.

Pelagius was charged with denying the reality of original sin, but it is perhaps more true to say that he explained it in an unusual manner. He also held that man might become passionless and sinless by free-will, and that the efficacy of baptism consisted in sanctification, not in remission. But his tenets were capable of being forced to dangerous conclusions, and in the hands of rash adherents like Coelestius they assumed forms which had drawn on them the condemnation of a council at Carthage. Pelagius had found many adherents in Italy and in Africa, but his chief successes were won in Palestine.

Whatever may have been Jerome's earlier leanings as regards Pelagianism, he now took the alarm. Ctesiphon had written to him on the subject in 415, and in 416 Orosius had brought him Augustine's book *On the Origin of the Soul*. Moreover, he was highly displeased with Pelagius, who had blamed his translation from the Hebrew, had criticised his *Commentary on the Ephesians*, had claimed his authority for the denial of original sin, and had above all seemed to agree with Rufinus and Origen.[1] In his answer to Ctesiphon Jerome promised that he would soon write against the Pelagians, and he published his *Dialogue* against them in three books towards the close of 415.[2] He was all the more anxious to do this, because in that year John, in a conference at Jerusalem, had openly sided with Pelagius against Orosius,[3] who, with Augustine's letter in his hand, accused him of heresy. It was on this occasion that Pelagius haughtily replied, "And what is Augustine to me?" Next year, in the Synod of Diospolis, at which fourteen bishops were present, neither Orosius, nor the two Gaulish bishops Heros and Lazarus, who had come to accuse Pelagius, chose to appear. The bishops were Greeks, the writings of Pelagius were in Latin, and everything had to be interpreted by himself or others. He had already succeeded in arousing some jealousy of the pretensions

[1] *Prol. Dial. c. Pelag.*, *Prol. in Jerem.*, and *Ep.* cxxxiii. 3.

[2] The *Dialogue*—Jerome's last word on doctrine—is cautious and moderate. In it he retracts his old opinion about the dispute of Peter and Paul at Antioch. An account of the *Dialogue* is given by Bishop Wordsworth (*Ch. Hist.* iii. 187-192).

[3] When he charged Orosius with blasphemy, the fervent young Spaniard replied, "How can the bishop, who is a Greek and knows no Latin, understand me who speak Latin and no Greek?"

of the Western bishops to be absolute arbiters in matters of the faith, and the bishops present were no match for him in speculative power or dialectic skill. Some of the errors charged against him he denied; other doctrines he admitted, but denied the sense put upon them; he asked leave to anathematise those who were said to hold certain other doctrines attributed to him, not as heretics but as fools. The general result of what Jerome calls this "miserable synod" was that Pelagius was absolved of the charge of heresy.[1]

The results of the synod were unfortunate for Jerome. A mob of the partisans of Pelagius—clergy, monks, and laity—attacked his monasteries, killed a deacon, set fire to the monastic buildings, and behaved with such violence that Eustochium, with her niece, the younger Paula, and her virgins, was driven to take refuge with Jerome himself in a tower adjoining the monastery which had been built as a place of refuge against the incursions of roving Arabs.[2] Worse consequences might have followed if the clergy and people of Bethlehem had not risen in their defence. The conflagration was soon extinguished, but Jerome and his community were obliged to shift as best they could until their ruined cells were restored. There is no proof that Pelagius had any complicity in this outrage, and John indignantly denied that he was in any way responsible. The danger, however, was so considerable that Eustochium and Paula, in their letter of complaint to Pope Innocent, suppress the names of the culprits. Jerome's allusions to the circumstances are guarded and enigmatical. Innocent wrote a severe letter to John, but the Bishop of Jerusalem died before it reached him. His successor Praylus dismissed Pelagius and his followers. "*Catiline*," writes Jerome to Riparius, "has been driven not only from the city, but from Palestine." [3]

The last of Jerome's extant letters is one to Augustine and Alypius congratulating them on having silenced the Pelagian Coelestius, and excusing himself for not having answered a book written in defence of the same heresy by the deacon Annianus.[4] Another far more powerful thinker took a share in the controversy —Theodore of Mopsuestia. He wrote "Five discourses against those who say that men sin by nature, not by intention."

[1] Aug. *De Gest. Pelag.* ii. 37-44. [2] Id. 34.
[3] *Ep.* cxxxviii. Jerome is always fertile in nicknames.
[4] *Ep.* cxliii., written towards the close of the year 419.

Fragments of this work are preserved by Photius (*Cod.* 177). In one of them he alludes to Jerome (εἴτε ὀνομάζει εἴτε ἐπονομάζει) under the insulting name of *Aram* (simply because Jerome lived in Syria). He regards his views as Manichean, blames his reliance on the teaching of evil-minded Jews in his translation from the Hebrew, and sneers at the "fifth Gospel" which he had discovered in the manuscript of the *Hexapla* in the library at Caesarea. Jerome makes no allusion to this attack; perhaps he never saw or heard of it.

XVI

Continued

LAST DAYS OF JEROME

"They saw the sanctuary desolate, and the altar profaned, and the gates burnt up, and shrubs growing in the courts as in a forest or in one of the mountains." —1 Macc. iv. 38.

"Quid satis est si Roma parum est?"—Virg.

SECTION XI

Jerome's literary activity continued unbroken to the close of his career. Ecclesiastics of all ranks, and distinguished persons of both sexes, were constantly writing to him on matters of theology, morals, and Biblical criticisms, and his answers were always interesting, sometimes valuable. He wrote a letter of consolation in 406 to Julianus in Dalmatia on a sudden accumulation of misfortunes, borne with stoical endurance; in 407 he wrote on Biblical difficulties to the Gaulish ladies Hedibia and Algasia; in 408 to Rusticus on penitence; in 409 to Ageruchia on preserving her widowhood; in 410 to Avitus on the errors of Origen; in 411 to Marcellinus on creationism, and a letter of ascetic counsels to another Rusticus, afterwards Bishop of Narbonne; in 412 to console Principia on the death of her mother Marcella; in 413 to Gaudentius on the education of his daughter as a virgin; in 414 to Demetrias on virginity, and to Dardanus on the land of promise. He invites the soldier Exsuperantius to the monastic life; he tells Evangelus that presbyters are superior to deacons, and that a Roman custom which he had adduced in favour of the opposite view is only the custom of a single city.

Two other letters written during this period are remarkable

as throwing a painful light on the dangers which were already becoming rife from the custom of clerical celibacy. One of these is a letter to a mother and daughter in Gaul.[1] A Gaulish monk came to Jerome and told him that he had travelled to Palestine, partly to see the holy places, but still more to consult with him about the misconduct of his mother and sister. The mother was a widow and the sister a virgin; but suddenly, if the daughter's excuses are to be believed, the widow began to throw off the proprieties of widowhood, to abandon fasting, to live a worldly life, and, tinging her eyes with antimony, to go out in gay apparel. The daughter left her, and they then both of them took clerics to live with them, assuming the specious but deeply-suspected name of *Syneisaktae*, or housekeepers of ecclesiastics. The monk told Jerome his story with many tears and in a voice broken by sobs, and on hearing it Jerome groaned aloud. "Pray write and reprove and reconcile them to each other," said the monk. "I am not a bishop," answered Jerome, "but the humble inhabitant of a cell, which I have sought in order to weep over my past sins and avoid present ones. How can I do what a son and a brother has vainly attempted? Retirement and notoriety are things incongruous." "You are too timid," answered the monk. "Where is your former firmness, the Lucilian sarcasm that once chastised the world?" "Nay," answered Jerome, "that is my very reason for being silent. My former rebukes have set every one against me. Misfortune has taught me to hold my tongue, since by rebuking vice I only incur detraction. The very walls echoed with abuse of me, and I was called a detractor." "It is not detraction," he replied, "to speak the truth. This is a private reproof, and only the few are thus guilty. Let me not have taken so long a journey in vain." "Well," said Jerome, "as the case is a special one, and the letter is to cross the sea, I will do what you wish. But I beg you to keep the matter secret. If my letter succeeds, let me share your happiness; if, as I expect, it fails, I shall have wasted my words and you your journey."

Accordingly, as the monk was starting home that day, Jerome at once dictated his letter. He is careful to imply that the suspicions of immorality may be unfounded, and the letter is thrown into such a form as to avoid offence as much as possible. It is, however, much like other letters of his, and we gather from it, as from the letter to Eustochium, not only that the institution

[1] *Ep.* cxvii.

of "holy women" living with the clergy caused extreme scandal, but also that Jerome looked with suspicion on many of the clergy and monks who did not live an ascetic life. He even goes so far as to bid the mother and daughter each of them openly to marry the ecclesiastic with whom she was living. That after all, he says, will be the lesser evil of the two.[1]

The other letter is still more startling. It is addressed to a deacon named Sabinianus, a clerical adventurer of the worst kind. What had been his occupation before he was ordained we do not know, but his mind had been fed on impure mimes and lascivious lyrics, and he was a notorious seducer and adulterer, a glutton and a vulgar debauchee. Among other infamous adventures he had lived with the wife of a distinguished barbarian General in her suburban villa in such reckless adultery, that the husband, who was abroad on foreign service, heard of it, and suddenly returned. The wife was seized, was publicly tried, and being found guilty was beheaded. She was not, so Jerome hints, the only victim who had expiated the crimes of Sabinianus with her life.[2] The adulterer escaped into the country through some subterranean passage, entered Rome in disguise, and took refuge among some Samnite brigands. But unable to breathe safely in Italy he braved the stormy sea rather than face the man whom he had wronged, and sailed to Syria. There he so completely imposed upon some distinguished and estimable bishop that he ordained him deacon, and gave him commendatory letters to his clergy. Armed with these letters, he made his way to the monastery of Bethlehem, was well received by Jerome, and was appointed a reader in the church. Here the handsome scoundrel began to renew his old crimes. By arts known to himself he succeeded in attracting the attention of one of Eustochium's virgins. "You lurked," says Jerome, "like a wolf in sheep's clothing, and after having been an adulterer against men, you longed to be an adulterer against Christ." In order to communicate with the nun who had pleased his roving glances, he had the sacrilegious audacity to thrust his letters beside the very altar of the manger,

[1] *Ep.* cxvii. 3: "Si corrupta es cur non palam nubis? Secunda post naufragium tabula est; quod male coeperis hoc saltem remedio temperare." What Jerome says of this letter (c. *Vigilant.* 3) does not mean that *the case* was imaginary, but that the actual criminality of the mother and daughter were hypothetical. Comp. sec. 12, *Ep.* cxvii.

[2] *Ep.* cxlvii. "Quod . . . a te nobilium *violata matrimonia publico caesa sint gladio.*"

and as he stood among the singers in the choir made signals to the girl where she could find his missives, as she bent to kneel before the shrine of the Nativity! By this means he discovered the window of her cell, which looked out towards the country. It was too high to permit of his reaching it, but the lovers were able to communicate by letters drawn up and dropped down by means of a cord. It was the custom of the nuns of Bethlehem to have their hair cut short for obvious reasons, into which Jerome enters with needless particularity, and since Sabinianus had now sworn to the nun that he would marry her, she managed, even in the Cave of the Nativity, to convey to him a packet which contained her shorn tresses and her girdle as a token of betrothal. Next, probably at the Christmas festival, they were able to arrange a meeting at the Chapel of the Angel to the Shepherds, a short distance from Bethlehem, where Jerome fears that they went to the worst lengths of guilt. After this, as they had no immediate opportunities of meeting—a point on which Jerome justly prides himself—the deacon went and passed a whole night under the nun's window, receiving and returning love letters, in which they arranged that Sabinianus should procure a ladder, and on a fixed day should fly with her aboard ship and escape from Syria. After this nocturnal vigil he returned to the monastery in the morning to read the gospel in chapel, and the monks thought that the unwonted paleness of his face was the result of a fasting vigil, which they knew to be very unlike his ordinary habits. "But at this point," writes Jerome, "the great Angel who guarded the chamber of Mary and the cradle of the Lord, in whose presence you committed such crimes, himself betrayed you." Some of the love letters were found and brought to Jerome, who read them not only with burning indignation but with eyes streaming with tears and a heart full of anguish. They were full of the most disgraceful passages, so bad that Jerome could not quote them. He kept them as a proof of the deacon's villainies.

On being discovered Sabinianus in great terror flung himself at Jerome's feet and begged forgiveness; and Jerome, after imploring him to repent in dust and ashes in some desert monastery, freely forgave him. But after detection in such a crime Sabinianus found Bethlehem intolerable, and taking his departure avenged himself by the most infamous slanders against the man who had treated him with so much forbearance. So far from

showing any signs of penitence, he went about "clothed in linen, his fingers laden with rings, his teeth carefully brushed, his thin hair elaborately arranged over his rubicund forehead, and his bull-neck enclosed in rolls of fat." No one could have suspected that this portly, perfumed, smooth-shaven person, who paced the streets like a sleek and dandy lover, who wore the triumphs and notoriety of his vices as if they were so many palm-branches, was a renegade deacon, an apostate monk!

This incident was only one of many sorrows which clouded the evening of Jerome's life, but he still pursued the Scriptural studies which were his chief work and his best consolation. He was mainly occupied with a commentary on the Prophets, and published in succession his books on Zechariah, Malachi, Hosea, Joel, Amos, and Daniel. They are all of them learned and interesting compilations, containing much valuable matter, but they are often uncertain in their tone and defaced by the vapid and vacillating mysticism which throws no light on the real sense. Even his contemporaries complained that in the uncritical collection of previous opinions he often left them in the dark about his own views.[1] One passage in the *Commentary on Daniel* nearly brought him into the danger of a public accusation. In explaining the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar's vision he referred the feet of iron and clay to the Roman Empire, and said, "For as in the beginning nothing was stronger and harder than the Roman Empire, so in the end of things nothing is weaker, since both in civil wars and against divers divisions of other nations we need the aid of barbarians." This was interpreted as a treasonable reference to the brave Vandal Stilicho, who was the generalissimo of the Roman forces; and Jerome might have been accused of high treason but for Stilicho's assassination, which took place before the matter could be brought to trial. He alludes to the fact in the preface to his *Commentary on Isaiah*. The truth of the Scriptures, he says, is not to be neglected in order to flatter princes, nor is a general discussion a wrong to an individual.

About the year 410 he completed his *Commentary on Isaiah* in eighteen books. It is perhaps the best of his commentaries, especially in questions of philology and criticism. His *Commentary on Ezekiel* was not finished till the year 415. Apart from the irrelevant, mystical, and homiletic matter, it contains many valuable interpretations, although it was written with difficulty

[1] See Aug. *Epp.* cxcvii. cxcviii.

and reluctance. It required all the urgency of Eustochium to cheer him to his labour. For he was now an old man. His heart was heavy with sorrow, his eyes were dim with age.[1] He found it impossible to read at night the small letters of his Hebrew manuscripts, which tried his eyes even in full daylight. Even Greek he was no longer able to read by lamplight, and he had to ask his brother monks to read to him. Added to this, in consequence of the inroad of the barbarians, an ever-increasing throng of ecclesiastics, monks, and beggars found their way to Bethlehem. The burdened resources of the community were strained to the utmost, and except during the still hours of the night the old man's time was incessantly occupied.

He had now lived to that epoch which marks the beginning of "the Death of Rome." In A.D. 402 Alaric led into Italy the army of the Visigoths, the first hostile army which Italy had seen. These five generations saw five invasions—those of the Visigoths, the Huns, the Vandals, the Ostrogoths, and the Lombards, of whom the last entered with Alboin A.D. 568. Alaric was urged to his work of retribution by irresistible voices, which said to him, "Go up to Rome and make it desolate." He besieged it first in 408, and reduced it to the horrors of famine and pestilence and degrading ransom. The voice which sounded in his ears, "Penetrabis ad Urbem,"[2] had been frustrated once, when the river *Urbis* barred his course; but it was thrice fulfilled. He besieged Rome a second time in 409, when the aesthetic phantom-Emperor Attalus, whom the senate had set up, heard in the amphitheatre the horrid cry, "Fix a price for human flesh." He besieged it a third time, and sacked it on Aug. 24, 410, bursting in by the Salarian Gate near the gardens, and the burning palace of Sallust.

In the tumultuous movement of nations even the inhabitants of Palestine knew no security. Already in 406 a wild horde of Isaurian mountaineers had burst on northern Palestine, and filled Jerusalem with terror. An intensely cold winter and a severe famine had caused Jerome deep anxiety as to the means by which he could maintain his large community of monks and the swarms of strangers who pressed into his hospice. Care and trouble and severe fasting induced another illness, which brought him once more to the gates of the grave. The holy Melania had

[1] *Praef. in Ezech. l. vii.*
[2] Claudian, *De Bell. Get.* v. 547.

prophesied to her family that Rome would fall, and the prophecy hardly needed much supernatural insight at a time when every week brought rumours about the devastations committed in every region of the northern Empire by Quadi, Vandals, Sarmatians, Alans, Gepidae, Heruli, Saxons, Burgundians, and Teutons. In the East the marches of the Empire were threatened by Persians and Armenians. Goths and Huns were swarming over the Danube. Franks and Germans were threatening the frontier of the Rhine. Of these the Huns especially inspired an indescribable terror by their hideousness and brutality; a tribe called the Taifals by manners as revolting as those of the Sioux.[1] He tells Ageruchia in 409 that, in his opinion, Antichrist was at hand.[2] He would not say all he might say lest he should seem to despair of the clemency of God. For thirty years Rome had lost regions which once were hers, from the Euxine to the Julian Alps, and the old barrier of the Danube was broken through. He had no more tears to shed. Except a few old men, the present race of Romans, born in sieges and captivity, no longer regretted a liberty they had never known. Who could believe it? How could history worthily describe the fact that Rome in the bosom of her own Empire was fighting no longer for glory but for safety; nay, not even fighting, but ransoming her existence with gold and all she possessed? And all this misery was not the fault of the most religious Emperors Arcadius and Honorius, but happened through the wickedness of a half-barbarian traitor, the Vandal Stilicho, who armed our enemies against us with our own resources! What is safe if Rome is perishing? Can Ageruchia think of marrying again amid events so ominous and so disastrous? This bold language was used a year before the assassination of Stilicho at Ravenna, and Jerome knew how perilous it was. "Not even our groans," he added, "are free, since we are unwilling, nay, we do not even dare, to beweep what we endure."

He went on toiling at his *Commentary on Ezekiel*, but when he heard that Rome had actually fallen the news burst on him like a thunderstorm. For three days and three nights the indignant Alaric delivered the Eternal City to sword and flame.[3] To pay the ransom which he had demanded at his first siege as the price of his former retirement, the Romans had melted down the images of the gods, and that of Virtus (manly fortitude)

[1] Amm. Marc. xxxi. 2, sec. 1, ix. sec. 6. [2] *Ep.* cxxiii. 17.
[3] See Thierry, *Nouveaux Récits de l'hist. romaine*, p. 451.

among them. Zosimus points to this as an omen of their speedy ruin. "When the image of Virtus was melted," he says, "every spark of manliness and virtue among the Romans was quenched."

We have already seen how the Goths burst into the house of Marcella, and so beat and maltreated her, that though she succeeded in gaining the refuge of a church she died a few days later. The whole city became a scene of horror and confusion, famine and misery, conflagration and massacre. Among many other friends of Jerome the noble Pammachius perished, we know not how. Jerome was overwhelmed with anguish and consternation. "Oh shame," he cries to Gaudentius, "the world is rushing to ruin. The glorious city, the capital of the Roman Empire, has been swallowed up in one conflagration. Every region is full of exiled Romans. Churches once hallowed have sunk into cinders and dust." So deep was his horror that he could scarcely pluck up courage to work. "For a long time," he writes to Demetrias, "you trembled amid the hands of the barbarians, and were sheltered in the bosom and with the robes of your aunt and mother. You saw yourself a captive—you shuddered at the savage countenances of enemies; with silent groans you saw the virgins of God seized.[1] Your city, once the capital of the world, is the sepulchre of the Roman people; and shall you on the Libyan shore accept as an exile an exiled bridegroom?"[2] "Who could have believed it," he asks,[3] "that Rome, founded on triumphs over the whole world, could fall to ruin? that she, the mother of nations, should also be their grave? that all the regions of the East, of Egypt and of Africa, should be filled with swarms of the youths and maidens of the former Lady of the World? that the holy city Bethlehem should see day by day illustrious and noble persons of both sexes, who once lived in lordliness and abundance, stream as beggars into her walls?" He could do nothing to help them;

[1] See *supra*, 215.

[2] *Ep.* cxxx. 5. It is in this letter that he falls into the gross folly of saying that the profession of virginity by Demetrias, against the wishes of all her family, made all Italy lay aside its mourning robes, and the half-ruined walls of Rome resumed their old splendour in part, thinking that God was propitious to them. Demetrias had discovered "*quod Romanae urbis cineres mitigaret*"; and the Romans rejoiced more because she had embraced the vow of virginity than their ancestors had done over the first victory after Cannae! The historian may well ask whether it was monkish enthusiasm or flattery, or the slavery of a declaimer to his own rhetoric, which made Jerome write such extravagant nonsense.

[3] *Praef. in Ezech. l. iii.*

he could only join his tears with theirs. When the news first reached him he was paralysed with horror; he could hardly recall his own name for thinking of the frightful scenes which had been witnessed in the fall of the Eternal City. In his letter to Principia on the death of her mother Marcella he says, "My voice is choked, and sobs prevent my words as I dictate. The city is taken which took the whole world; nay more, it perished by famine before it fell of the sword, and scarcely a few were found to be taken captive. The rage of the famished broke into infamous feeding, men tore each other's limbs, the mother did not spare her sucking child.

> "Quis cladem illius noctis, quis funera fando
> Explicet, aut possit lacrimis aequare dolorem?
> Urbs antiqua ruit, multos dominata per annos,
> Plurima perque vias sparguntur inertia passim
> Corpora, perque domos, et plurima mortis imago."[1]

But if Christians sought for the cause of that earth-shaking catastrophe they might have found it in the picture of Roman society drawn by Ammianus Marcellinus, whom Mommsen calls "the most earnest and trustworthy of all the extant Latin authors of this period." He tells us of the rich apparel, and sumptuous living, and neglect of every nobler art; of the pleasureless devotion to ignoble pleasure; of the insolent contempt of strangers; of wealth so overgrown that those who had £81,000 a year fell only into the second class of the senatorial valuation; of family life destroyed, and friendship only known in the gambling clubs; of a vain decaying court, ever increasing in impotence; of foreign adventurers at the head of the army; of a senate as arrogant as it was cowardly, which declared that no faith was to be kept with barbarians at the very time that the legions which checked the modern Hannibal could only be hired from among the Huns. These were the causes why the walls fell which for eight centuries had never been entered by any foreign foe; why the Gothic waggons groaned under heaps of gold and silver, and Roman refugees who once were rich were to be found wandering as exiles in every land. Alaric himself expressed the dim consciousness that, even had he desired it, he could not have stemmed the tide of destruction. "He had become a tool in the hands of a mightier master, and, whether he

[1] Virg. *Æn.* ii.

felt or not what he was destroying, it was his fate to destroy the city of a thousand years—to destroy alike its incomparable splendour and its incomparable wickedness." After that "poverty took the place of wealth and despondency of arrogance."[1]

In 411 Bethlehem itself was again terrified by a wild inroad of Bedouin Arabs from the south, to which Jerome alludes in his letter to Marcellinus, but of which he gives us scarcely any details beyond the fact that his community was delivered by the interposition of God's mercy.[2] And so, in sickness and weakness and desolate old age, having outlived Heliodorus, Nepotian, Pammachius, Marcella, Asella, Paula, Fabiola, and not only his most revered contemporaries, but nearly all whom he best loved, amid wars and rumours of wars and the shaking of the nations, he awaited the approach of death. Eustochium, his lifelong friend and companion, the virgin daughter of his saintly affection, died peacefully in 418, sixteen years after her mother, and was buried with her in the cave at Bethlehem. The only happy circumstances which brightened his later years were the establishment at Bethlehem of the younger Paula, the granddaughter of Paula and daughter of Toxotius and Laeta. She had been devoted to virginity from her birth by the vow of her parents, and the first word she had been taught to lisp was Alleluia.[3] Even at her birth Jerome had written to her mother about the mode of her education, and she had probably joined her aunt Eustochium at an early age in the convent at Bethlehem. When Eustochium died she became the third abbess of her race.

Jerome had also been gladdened by the arrival of Albina, the Christian wife of the Pagan Pontifex Albinus, with her daughter, the younger Melania, and her son-in-law, the noble Pinianus. As the elder Melania had been the lifelong friend of Rufinus, and had supported his cause against that of Jerome, he could not but rejoice that his granddaughter had come to join him after the strange treatment which the three had received at Hippo, where Augustine (as we shall see) had unaccountably failed to exert his authority for their adequate protection.

Of the death of Jerome we know nothing, for no credence can be attached to the long story of an anonymous writer. According to Prosper of Aquitaine he died on Sept. 30, 420. The fact that for the nine months of 420 no letter of his is extant

[1] Mommsen, *Cont. Rev.* May 1871.
[2] *Ep.* cxxvi. 2.
[3] *Ep.* cviii. 26.

makes it probable that his death was preceded by a long illness, during which he was unable to write. His hair had long been white, his forehead ploughed with wrinkles, his cheeks furrowed with the traces of many tears, his eyes weak and sunken, his face pale and haggard, his chin flaccid, his whole appearance neglected and woebegone.[1] We may well suppose that the younger Paula and the younger Melania closed his dying eyes. He was buried near Paula and Eustochium in a cavern close by the scene of the Nativity. The spirit of legend invented many fictions about the miracles wrought at his grave, and about the imaginary translation of his body in the seventh century to the Church of Sta. Maria Maggiore in Rome. But from the date of his last letter we know nothing more about the community at Bethlehem, not even so much as the name of his successor. His genius, and that of a few of his great contemporaries in the East and West, gives us with singular vividness a knowledge of the events and the tone of thought in the fourth and the first half of the fifth centuries; but "with the correspondence of Jerome our close acquaintance with the Christian society of that time, so gracious, so ecstatic, and so learned, dies away. A few more letters of Augustine, a few also of Paulinus of Nola, and night falls upon the West."[2]

The foregoing pages have revealed Jerome as he was—as he delineated himself in his own letters and writings, and as he appeared to his friends and contemporaries. It only remains to add a few words respecting his character and the services which he rendered to the Christian Church.

He fully deserves the title which Ozanam has given him of "The master of Christian prose for all the following centuries."[3] If any one should be called "the Christian Cicero" it is he and not Lactantius, who, though his style may be more purely classical, stands far below Jerome in genius, individuality, and force. The style of Tertullian is as deeply impressed with a passionate individuality, but Tertullian has none of Jerome's versatility and copiousness. Augustine is eloquent and antithetic, but his loose-

[1] "Nunc jam cano capite, et arata rugis fronte, et ad instar boum palearibus a mento pendentibus."

[2] Am. Thierry, *Jérome*, ii. 245.

[3] *Hist. de Civil. chrétienne au V^e Siècle*, ii. 100.

ness and prolixity are often wearisome. Jerome is always vigorous and never dull. He used to complain that the harsh sounds of Hebrew had entirely robbed him of the beauty and elegance of his Latin style, but he had been so deeply imbued with classical literature, and so frequently—in spite of his dream—recalled its expressions and method, that he gained in freedom and force anything which he may have lost in classical finish. His style is far superior to the pale Ciceronianism of the Renaissance scholars, and one of the reasons why it never palls upon us is the strength which it derives from the mixture of Semitic with Western influences. His words, however, can be as little "weighed in jeweller's scales" as those of Luther, and in reading his passionate invectives and immense exaggerations we must make allowances for the temperament of the man—for the animation, the elasticity, the inextinguishable wit which contrasts so strongly with the sombre moral earnestness of Augustine, and which frequently reminds us of the flashes of John Donne and Robert South.

He was an omnivorous reader of Greek. He was specially familiar with Homer and Hesiod, and he had read Demosthenes, Herodotus, Aristotle, and others. Among Latin writers he knew great part of Virgil by heart, and was acquainted with the works of Varro, Sallust, Suetonius, Pliny, and Tacitus. He was a profound student of patristic writings, both Greek and Latin. He seems to have read the works of all the chief Christian writers who preceded him, and his judgments respecting them are full of insight. Among the Greek Fathers he specially admired Origen, and among the Latin, Tertullian. He is eloquent and impassioned, but his works are sometimes defaced by traces of personal vanity, and much more frequently by a declamatory rhetoric which, as he himself confesses, was intended to secure victory much more than to define truth. The constant recurrence of the same swelling metaphors which are often heaped one upon another till the force of the original metaphor is lost, and the tendency to fall again and again into the same phrases, betray a certain mannerism in his style, and sometimes detract from our estimate of his sincerity. In reading him, one is reminded of Cicero's description of how he showed himself off before his auditors and raved about flames and daggers—*Nosti istas* λεκύθους *!*[1] In fact, he was far more deeply influenced by the declamations of Cicero

[1] Cic. *Epp. ad Att.* i. 14, 4.

than was at all desirable for a Christian writer ;[1] and to this, perhaps, is due alike the unblushing sophistry in which he deals, and the immeasurable invective in which he flings truth and decency altogether to the winds. And yet, when we have made the fullest deduction for all these faults, he remains the most interesting and vivid of the Latin Fathers.

Nor can there be any question that he is also the greatest linguistic critic among Latin expositors. It is true that his knowledge of Greek, which he could speak with ease, was not of so critical a character as to prevent him from falling into occasional errors of translation,[2] and that his knowledge of Hebrew was not such as can be for a moment compared in accuracy with that of modern scholars like a Gesenius or a Delitzsch. If it had been he could never have fallen into the absurdity of believing that Hebrew poetry is sometimes written in iambic trimeters or other Greek or Latin metres. But it must be remembered that he was one of the very few Fathers who knew any Hebrew whatever, and that he learnt it without grammar, without lexicon, without vowels, points, or diacritic marks of any kind, but only in the unmethodical manner—no other was open to him—of reading the *Hexapla* of Origen, and receiving occasional oral instruction from his Jewish Rabbis. It is an easy task for modern scholars to point out the etymological and other mistakes which are patent in his book *On Hebrew Names*, or to laugh at the strange attempt to derive Greek names from Hebrew roots : but how many modern scholars can speak and write Latin and Greek and read Hebrew as well as Jerome did in spite of the enormous disadvantages with which he had to struggle ? Augustine could never take the trouble, he tells us, even to master Greek ; Jerome with intense infinite labour mastered Hebrew as well, and stood almost alone among the Fathers as a *homo trilinguis.*

Again, we must assign to Jerome the first place among the Latin Fathers as an interpreter of Scripture.[3] In single merits he may be surpassed by Augustine, but if we consider how many merits he combined, his superiority cannot be challenged. We

[1] As Clericus has shown, *Quaestt. Hieron.* p. 233 *sqq.*

[2] Clericus has pointed out many instances in Jerome's version of the *Chronicon* of Eusebius.

[3] "Deus qui Ecclesiae Tuae in exponendis sacris Scripturis beatum Hieronymum Confessorem Tuum Doctorem maximum providere dignatus es." —*Collect* in *Roman Breviary*, Sept. 3.

admit to the full his frequent lack of exegetical decision, the compilatory and heterogeneous character of his comments, his not unfrequent self-contradictions, the excessive haste with which he wrote, the uncritical way in which he forced Old Testament passages into Christian meanings, his constant digressions into tropology, allegory, mystic symbolism, and hair-splitting refinements, the exaggerated tone of some of his inferences. Yet to this day Jerome's commentaries are more read than those of any of the Fathers because of their learning and freshness, their linguistic carefulness, their clear general perception that all other interpretations should rest upon the plain historic sense, the mass of curious details which they preserve, the insight which they give us into a multitude of Greek and Latin works which are no longer extant, the independent attitude which they hold towards all questions in which theological orthodoxy could not be challenged. If we could preserve but one single patristic commentator from the wreck of antiquity, an almost universal vote would rescue from oblivion the commentaries of Jerome.

As a critical reviser and translator he deserves the highest praise. In an age when the Septuagint version was regarded as inspired and infallible, he saw its numberless imperfections,[1] and in spite of what he calls "the faction of Grunters," he persuaded Augustine that he was in the right in translating from the original Hebrew. The Vulgate will ever remain an immortal monument of Jerome's courage, ability, and fame. The Church owes him yet another debt of gratitude for his clear, if sometimes wavering, assertion of the distinction to be drawn between the canonical Scriptures and the Apocrypha. His view of inspiration is nowhere rigidly defined. Sometimes he sees the profanity and absurdity of the dogma of verbal dictation, but he was too timid to face the question directly, and though his comments claim a right to criticise the sacred authors by the light of Christian knowledge and the teaching of the Spirit, he talks in other places as though in every passage there was a *multiplex intelligentia*, and as though there were mysteries and sacraments even in the order of the Hebrew words. He says in one letter that nothing is more objectionable than to drag Scripture against its will into our own opinions, and to make ecclesiastical mysteries out of one's own intellect; and in another that it is wrong "so to love

[1] *Comm. in Ezech. xxiii.*

Christ as to pervert history."[1] But his theory is superior to his common practice. Luther had an intense dislike to him because of his ascetic and monastic proclivities, his declamatoriness, and his substitution of outward works and observances for the pure and simple Gospel; but even Luther puts the Vulgate above the Septuagint, and was not insensible to the merits of his learned labours.[2] The Middle Ages unfortunately followed both Augustine and Jerome in the very points in which their influence was least beneficial. They abandoned Jerome's critical freedom for Augustine's bald traditionalism, and they abandoned Augustine's deeper insight into evangelic truth for Jerome's externalism and will-worship. The Reformation was needed to correct the balance.[3]

Jerome's many-sided interests are illustrated by his further contributions to Hermeneutic literature in his edition of the *Chronicon* of Eusebius, and in his topography of the Holy Land. His letters are full of interesting facts and narratives which bear on the events of his time. His Catalogue or book on illustrious men has a permanent value in Church history. His biographies of various saints were the precursors of an abundant literature, but they unfortunately set the example of credulousness and of that extravagant exaggeration of the value of ascetic practices which made them the model of the wild Hagiology of the Middle Ages. In no respect was the influence of Jerome more pernicious than in fostering the tendency to identify "the religious" with monks and nuns, and to disparage all holiness which did not exhibit itself in the form of self-maceration and monastic seclusion.

It is as a theologian that he stands lowest. Luther was guilty of unfairness in asserting that Jerome says nothing of Christ except the mere name, and teaches nothing about faith, or hope, or love, or the works of faith. But Jerome was rather a scholar and a man of erudition than an original thinker. He was marvellously timid. The least charge or suspicion of heterodoxy, the slightest censure on the part of a distinguished bishop, threw him into a paroxysm of alarm. His one determination was to be orthodox with the current orthodoxy. He took great care never to assert anything for which he could not quote a list of

[1] *Ep.* liii. 7; *Praef. in Isaj. v. lib.* 1.

[2] "Nulla enim privata persona tantum efficere potuisset." Luther, *Werke* (Erl. ed.), lvii. 4.

[3] See Zöckler, pp. 380, 381.

authorities. He can hardly be said to have any system of his own, but held a set of doctrines closely allied to those of Romanism. Though he had been for years an ardent admirer of Origen, and though he was proud of having learnt from men like Gregory of Nazianzus and Didymus of Alexandria, who shared that admiration, yet the authority of the narrow-minded Epiphanius, and of the worldly trimmer Theophilus,[1] drove him in an access of terror into the fiercest denunciations of the great teacher to whom he was so deeply indebted. Though he had shown such leanings to Pelagian or Semi-Pelagian opinions that Pelagius himself quoted him as an authority, a letter or two of Augustine's led him to make a fierce assault on that astute heresiarch. In neither controversy does he show any consistency or depth. His polemical standpoint is that of an advocate with a brief. He has not thought out the disputed points for himself. He relies on Epiphanius, and even on Theophilus, for his theology, and contributes nothing to the discussion but scraps of Scripture, an abundance of italics and exclamations, and a perfect Cycloborus of abuse. One is involuntarily reminded of Shakespeare's "Methinks the lady protesteth too much." He adds little to the real solution of the questions, but his one anxiety is to overwhelm his adversaries, and to clear himself from suspicion of any leaning to their condemned opinions. The most objectionable part of his controversial writings is their indulgence in the bitterest personalities. He does not go so far as to invoke the secular arm against heretics, or to claim their execution, but his abusive epithets against them are discreditably inexhaustible. Speaking of an ill-understood remark of Origen which implied inequality in the persons of the Trinity, he says, "If I had heard my father or mother or brother saying those things against Christ, I would have torn their blaspheming mouths like those of a mad dog, and my hand would have been first against them."[2]

Nor, once more, can Jerome be regarded as a great ethical writer. There is neither breadth nor depth in his moral system. It would have been better if he could have seen the truth that (as St. Hugo of Avalon wisely said) God meant us to be men and women, not monks and nuns. His morality betrays the worst limitations of monasticism, with nothing of that deep

[1] ὁ ἀμφαλλάξ, Palladius, *Vit. Chrys.* 20.

[2] *C. Johann. Jerosol.* 8. Jerome is fond of talking about mad dogs.

emotion of spiritual love which throbs through every sentence of *The Imitation of Christ*. He had great influence over mystics, even over St. Theresa, but the glow of the genuine mystic is absent from his pages. He was not a Christian preacher. He was indeed an ordained presbyter, but he has not left us a single specimen of the manly discourses with which an Augustine and a Chrysostom thrilled the crowded basilicas of Hippo and Constantinople. Those letters which most resemble ethical treatises are based on a Manichean exaggeration of the intrinsic merits of virginity or widowhood. No less than sixteen of his most elaborate epistles are rhetorical amplifications of this thesis, mixed with rules for the maintenance of purity by the avoidance of society. They are filled with satirical sketches of monks and clerics whose view of life was different from that of Jerome. They were narrow and mistaken in their point of view, and far from wholesome in their total influence, though they are intermingled with wise sentences of warning and exhortation.[1]

Two opposite views have been taken of Jerome's character. In his own days he was warmly esteemed by Pope Damasus, Augustine, Orosius, Paulinus, Sulpicius Severus, and other men of eminent talent and goodness; while, on the other hand, Rufinus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Posidonius, and Palladius, as well as a host of detractors, judged him very unfavourably. Then began a chorus of unbroken eulogy till the days of the Reformation, when Erasmus bestowed on him the warmest praise and Luther the severest condemnation. In more recent times some of even the Romanist writers, like R. Simon, Tillemont, and Du Pin, and among Protestants Cave, Engelstoft, and Schröckh, have freely criticised him; and the unmitigated eulogies of Martianay and Vallarsi have been confronted by the searching criticism of Rosenmüller and Le Clerc. Even Dr. Newman evidently dislikes him. Amédée Thierry has written his biography in a lively and flattering romance; Otto Zöckler has depicted him with singular judgment in an accurate and scholarly treatise. All will agree with the latter in regarding him, if not as *maximus doctor ecclesiae*, yet certainly as the most learned and eloquent of the Western Fathers. I have not attempted to disguise his faults, but he was surely a true servant of Christ. He lived a life of constant activity, of con-

[1] See *Epp.* 14, 22, 52, 54, 71, 79, 107, 117, 118, 122, 123, 125, 128, 130.

tinuous self-denial; and when we weigh his defects against his lifelong self-devotion to the cause of learning and moral effort, we may feel confident that, whatever may be men's judgment respecting him, he has heard long since the blessed words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Representations of St. Jerome as one of the Four Latin Fathers are very frequent. "Of the four," says Mrs. Jameson, "he is, as a subject of painting, by far the most popular, not merely because of his striking character and the picturesque incidents of his life, but also for his great importance and dignity as founder of monachism in the West, and as author of the universally received translation of the Old and New Testaments into the Latin language. There is scarcely a collection of pictures in which we do not find a St. Jerome, either doing penance in the desert, or writing his famous translation, or meditating on the mystery of the Incarnation."[1] The lion, which is his symbol, represents his fervid character. It gave rise to the legend, often represented in art, of his healing a lion who came to him with a wounded foot.

[1] Two of the most famous pictures in which he is represented are the Last Communion of Jerome, by Domenichino, in the Vatican, and St. Jerome in his Study, by Giovanni Bellini, in our National Gallery.

XVII

ST. AUGUSTINE

"Tantillus puer et tantus peccator."—Aug. *Conf.*

SECTION I

THE YOUTH AND EDUCATION OF AUGUSTINE

Aurelius[1] Augustinus—the greatest of the Western Fathers, and the man who has exercised the deepest influence on the theology of the Church, was born at Tagaste (Tajilt), a municipality in the province of Constantine in southern Numidia, on

Lives and Editions.

Vita S. Aurel. Augustini, auctore Possidio; Vita S. Aurel. Augustini, ex ejus potissimum scriptis concinnata (Migne, *Patrologia*, xxxii. pp. 66-584), Paris, 1877. Tillemont, *Mémoires*, vol. xiii.; Schröckh, *Kirchengesch.* vol. xv.; Neander, *Ch. Hist.*; Böhringer, *Aurelius Augustinus, Bischof von Hippo* (*Die Alte Kirche*, vol. xi.); Bähr, *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.* vol. ii. Stuttgart, 1877; Bindemann, *Der heil. Augustinus*, 2 vols. Berl. 1844-55; Clausen, *Aur. Augustinus Sacr. Script. Interpres*, Hafn. 1820; Klöth, *Der heilig. Kirchenl. Augustin*, Aix-la-Chapelle, 1850; Flottes, *Études sur S. Augustin, son génie, son âme, sa philosophie*, Paris, 1861; Archbishop Trench, *Essay on the Merits of St. Augustine as an Interpreter of Holy Scripture* ("Sermon on the Mount," Lond. 1850); Nourrisson, *Philos. de St. Augustin*, 2 vols. Paris, 1865; Möhler, *Patrologie*; Cunningham, *St. Austen, and his Place in the History of Christian Thought*, Hulsean Lectures, Cambridge, 1886; Bright, *Antipelagian Treatises*.

Editions of St. Augustine's Works.

Amerbach, 9 vols. Basle, 1506, Paris, 1515; Erasmus, 10 vols. Basle, 1529, Paris, 1531-2, Venice, 1552, and often since; Theologi Lovanienses, 10 vols. Antwerp, 1577 (often reprinted); Benedictine, 11 vols. Paris, 1679-1700; Le Clerc (Joannes Phereponus), 12 vols. Antwerp, 1700-1703; Gaume, 11 vols. Paris,

[1] The surname Aurelius is given him by his friend Orosius in the dedication of his history.

or near Nov. 13, 354. Tagaste was an obscure town of Africa, not far from Madaura and Hippo.[1] Here he grew up

> "A Roman, moulded by that sun and sea
> That lit and laved the infant Hannibal,
> One who with Afric's blood could still combine
> The civic memories of a Roman line."[2]

The names of his parents were Patricius and Monnica. Patricius, a decurio of Tagaste,[3] was a heathen who did not become a catechumen till 370 when Augustine was seventeen years old, and who died the following year, shortly after he had been baptized.[4] He was a man of violent temper, who until his conversion to Christianity had little or no regard for religion or morality. He cherished an inordinate ambition for the worldly success of his son, and for this purpose he exercised self-denial in order to give to the brilliant boy an education far higher than might have been expected from his very moderate means. When Augustine was a bishop he once told his congregation that they might have expected him to appear in a more splendid robe, but that this would have ill become a poor man like himself, the son of poor parents. Patricius exercised but little influence over his son, and not for good.[5]

Monnica,[6] on the other hand, was a sincere Christian, the daughter of Christian parents, who owed much to the teaching of a pious nurse to whom they had entrusted the care of their infant.

Among other excellent rules, this aged slave-woman, who had nursed Monnica's father before her, had taught the little girls of the family to live very simply and never to drink even water except at table, lest some day they should be tempted to drink too much wine. "Now," she said, "you drink water; but when you

1836-9; Antonelli, 14 vols. Venice, 1858-1860; Migne, 10 vols. Paris, 1841. The edition referred to in my references is the Benedictine of 1797 (*Editio Tertia Veneta*).

[1] *Ep.* cxxiv.; *Conf.* ii. 3, sec. 5. It is on the Souk-aras, a tributary of the Mejerda (Blakesley, *Algeria*, p. 367).

[2] Lord Houghton. See the Bishop of Derry's sermon on *The Confessions* in the St. James's Lectures, p. 116.

[3] Possid. *Vit. Aug.* 1: "De numero curialium," *i.e.* he belonged to the provincial senate.

[4] *Conf.* ix. 9, secs. 19, 22.

[5] *Serm.* ccclvi. 13; *Conf.* ii. 3, sec. 5.

[6] Monnica is the orthography of the MSS. Bähr, *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.* ii. 225. Mr. Moule thinks that the name may be connected with *μάννος, monile.*

grow up and marry you will have the keys of stores and cellars, and will have got into a habit of drinking, and will despise water but will drink wine." It was the foolish custom of that day, as of ours, for parents to tempt their children to sip wine even when, as was the case with Monnica, they do not like it. She used to do this when she drew the wine from the cask (*cuppa*) into a jug (*lagunc-ula*). But the wine soon created a fatal craving for itself. She took a little more, and every day a little more, until at last she had got into a habit of secretly drinking cups full of unmixed wine. A single maidservant was the confederate of her evil habit, and one day, when a fierce quarrel rose between them, this girl, with bitterest insult, called her a winebibber (*meribibula*). The disgraceful taunt acted on the mind of Monnica like a medicine, and from that moment she saw the foulness of the habit and abandoned it.

She was married at an early age to Patricius, and her married life began unhappily, because her mother-in-law had been set against her by the whispering tongues of evil-minded women-servants. But Monnica so completely overcame these prejudices and won the affection of her husband's mother that she spontaneously informed Patricius of the conduct of these mischievous and malignant women. He, according to the fashion of that day, flogged them, and his mother told them that henceforth they should be always flogged if they said a word to her against her daughter-in-law.

Young as Monnica was when she married Patricius, her one desire was to win him to faith and holiness by her meek, loving, and faithful behaviour. When he stormed and raged at her in his passionate moods she defended herself only by silence, and waited till he should return to a better mind. In this way she escaped the blows and personal ill-treatment which in that day so many women had to endure at the hands of heathen husbands. Her neighbours, knowing the sort of man to whom she was married, were amazed that she never had the black eyes and bruised body of which they, though married to gentle husbands, so bitterly complained. But Monnica used to tell them that she, on the other hand, had never had to complain of even one day's domestic strife with her husband. The fault, she answered them, lay not so much in their husbands as in their own ungovernable tongues. In another way also she set to the matrons of Tagaste an honourable example. She was a universal peacemaker. When ladies quarrelled and

poured their immeasurable abuse of one another into her ears, instead of repeating it she let it go no farther, and did her best to reconcile the foes. "I should have thought this a small virtue," says Augustine, "if I had not learnt by sad experience the endless troubles which, when the horrid pestilence of sins is flowing far and wide, are caused by the repetition of the words of angry enemies and by their exaggeration. It is a man's duty to do his best to alleviate human enmities by kindly speech, not to excite and aggravate them by the repetition of slanders."

Monnica bore to Patricius at least three children—Augustine, Navigius,[1] and a daughter who is not named, who afterwards became the abbess of a community of nuns.

Augustine was born when Monnica was twenty-three years of age, and she at once made him a catechumen, so that even as an infant he was signed with the sign of the cross, and received "the sacrament of salt."[2] She had to struggle from the first against the evil example set to Augustine by his father, but she taught him from the earliest years the name of Jesus, and its sweetness lingered in his memory even in his worst excesses.[3] Augustine might have said, as was said by Lord William Russell when he stood on the scaffold, "I thank God for having given me a religious education; for even when I forgot it most, it still hung about me and gave me checks."

We may now follow for some years the direct guidance of Augustine himself. He is one of the very few men who, like Dante in his *Purgatorio*, and Bunyan in his *Grace Abounding*, and yet more directly Rousseau—though in a manner widely different from Rousseau's—has left us his *Confessions*. With holy audacity he lays bare to us the history of his thoughts and passions, the secrets of his life and heart. His objects in writing the *Confessions* were manifold. If he at all resembled other men, it must have cost him a bitter pang thus to reveal the sins of his youth; but he thought—and mankind has confirmed his judgment—that it was well for one among so many millions to say what God had done for his soul. He wished to be known as he really was and as he once had been. Of that book he writes to the Count Darius: "See what I was in myself and by myself. I had

[1] *De Beat. Vit.* secs. 7, 14.

[2] *Conc. Carthag. Prim.* iii. *Can.* 5 (A.D. 397); *Conf.* i. 11; *De Catech. rud.* 26.

[3] *Conf.* iii. 4, sec. 8: "Hoc nomen Salvatoris mei . . . in ipso adhuc lacte matris tenerum cor meum praebiberat et alte retinebat."

destroyed myself; but He who made me remade me. And when you have found me there, pray for me that I may not fail but may be perfected."[1] He also wished to stir up others to the love and fear of God as they read what He had done for his soul, and to show us that "God has made us for Himself and that our heart is restless till it rests in Him."[2] He thought too that men—encouraged by reading how God had led a sinner to forsake the error of his way—might be led to say with him, "Narrow is the home of my soul that Thou shouldst come to it; may it be expanded by Thee! It is ruinous; restore it. It has much to offend Thine eyes; I confess and know it; but who shall cleanse it, or to whom else shall I cry but Thee, 'Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret faults; keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins'?"[3]

Augustine's *Confessions* have often been compared with those of Rousseau, but they only resemble each other in the fact that both of these writers tried to deal honestly with themselves, and to tell without subterfuge the shame of their past lives. In all other respects they are in violent contrast. Rousseau ends by telling us that he has painted himself as he was, and that if any one thinks of him as an unworthy man he is himself "un homme à étouffer." He begins by saying that when the last trumpet sounds he is ready to present himself book in hand before the Sovereign Judge, and calling on all men to listen to his confessions, he will challenge any one living to say, "Je fus meilleur que cette homme-là." Augustine, on the other hand, prostrates himself with tears of bitter penitence at the feet of God to implore the mercy in which he trusted, and to thank God for the peace which he had found, when his Saviour had given back to him the clean heart and the free spirit. The confessions of Rousseau are the confessions of the natural, impenitent, unregenerate man; the confessions of Augustine are those of the repentant sinner and the forgiven saint.

He begins with his infancy, when first he entered unconsciously on his mortal life or living death. He speaks of his infant smiles, his first arrival at consciousness, the little fits of temper by which he showed so early the taint of inborn sin. Then came his early boyhood and the beginning of his school days. His parents were intensely eager that he should learn much, and distinguish

[1] *Ep.* ccxxxi. 6 (comp. 2 Cor. xii. 6).
[2] *Conf.* i. 1; Possid. *Vit. Aug.* 1.
[3] *Conf.* i. 5, sec. 6.

himself, and occupy the then admired position of a teacher of rhetoric and pleader at the bar. For thousands of years down to very recent times the human race has been unable to rise above the brutal stupidity of supposing that the best and indeed the only way of teaching is by means of physical torture. Augustine was a quick and lively boy, but he could not bear the drudgery of routine, and he freely criticises the thorny road through which he was forced to pass by those who from time immemorial have multiplied labour and sorrow to the sons of Adam. Like Luther, he acutely felt the horror of being incessantly beaten, in spite of the fact that his parents and elders laughed at him for being so sensitive. What seemed to them a trivial harm was to him a deadly evil, and as a little schoolboy it was his daily and passionate prayer that he might escape the rod. In this endeavour, however, he did not succeed, for the charms of playing at ball were far more immediately attractive than the prospect of being scourged was terrifying. Memory and ability did not, he found, supersede the necessity of diligence;—but when he had once begun a game at ball he could not bear to be defeated. The love of play, the fondness for the immoral excitement of the theatres and public games, and the curiosity with which he listened to the tales of mythology, are the chief faults with which he charges his early boyhood. But he still bore in mind what he had heard about eternal life, and when he fell seriously ill and thought that he was about to die, he entreated his mother that he might receive baptism. A sudden recovery prevented the granting of his wish, and Monnica shared the unwise and superstitious view of her age that it was unsafe to confer baptism until the temptations of early manhood were past.

As a boy he did not love study in spite of the incessant pressure put upon him by both his parents "that he might satiate the insatiable passion for copious emptiness and ignominious glory." One great loss which resulted from this intellectual indolence was his failure to learn Greek. It would have been of the utmost use to him in his future theological studies, and as a consequence of his neglect he had to depend on Jerome and others for translations of the masterpieces of Greek theology. He could indeed spell out the meaning of a simple commentary, but he was never quite at ease with a Greek book, and had much reason to lament his loss.[1] He had to rely on Victorinus for his views of

[1] *De Trin.* iii. 1.

Plato, and on other translators for his knowledge of Greek philosophy.[1] Meanwhile the romantic emotional boy was delighted with Virgil, for he had learnt Latin from his infancy in the easiest and most pleasant way. He was charmed, he says, with the wanderings of "some Æneas or other," while he thought nothing of his own,[2] and wept over the death of Dido with a commiseration which was rather due to his own deadness in trespasses and sins. On the other hand, the multiplication table was detestable to him, and "twice one is two, twice two is four," was an "odious lilt" in his ears. Even the terror of the rod could not induce him to love the "most sweet emptiness" of Homer, because he never could get over the difficulties of the language. We see in these confessions the sort of intellect with which we have to deal. The imaginative boy was father to the man. The voluminous fluency of his genius would have been more precious in quality if it had been controlled and strengthened by a training more rigid and more mathematical.

Augustine's education was for the most part literary and classical. Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil, and other Fathers were ardent advocates of the custom of training Christian boys in heathen literature. Augustine, on the other hand, looked on it with considerable misgiving. He was inconsistent in this as in many other opinions, but he felt that there is undoubtedly in the literature of heathendom a "*ver rongeur*." He distinctly indicates that it has a corrupting effect, and in support of his view he quotes the youth in Terence's *Eunuchus*, who defends his own immoralities by the example of Jupiter.[3] "I do not," says Augustine, "accuse the words which were as chosen and precious vessels, but the wine of error which was drunk to us in the words by drunken teachers, and unless we drank we were beaten, nor might we appeal to any sober judge." When he declaimed he was loudly applauded both by masters and teachers, but whatever might be the exquisiteness of form, he felt that the matter of his studies was smoke and wind, and that it would have been better for him if his teachers had been less horrified by solecisms and more by moral faults. The boy's character did not improve. When he shirked his work in order to amuse

[1] *De Civ. Dei*, viii. 10.

[2] *Conf.* i. 13, sec. 20: "Æneae *nescio cujus* errores."

[3] "At quem Deum! Qui templa coeli summa sonitu concutit. Ego homuncio id non facerem? Ego vero feci." Ter. *Eun.* iii. 5.

himself at games or shows, he used to deceive his tutor and his masters and his parents "by innumerable lies." He also stole from their table or larder either to indulge his own appetite or to give to his companions. In his games he used to cheat in order to win the victory, although he used furiously to inveigh against his companions when they did the same. When he was caught he used to fly into a passion. And in these faults of boyhood he saw but a prophecy of the similar but larger faults of a worldly manhood. And yet he concludes the first book of his confessions by thanking God for the many mercies and blessings with which He had surrounded his early years.

He spent his sixteenth year at home, and he felt that it was the most decisively fatal year of his moral degeneracy. This was partly due to the fact that it was an idle year. His parents had withdrawn him from a school at Madaura[1] in order to save expense, desiring to send him when he was seventeen to Carthage, "the Muse of Africa," that he might receive the best education which Africa could furnish.[2] The withdrawal of school restraints, and the hot blood of an African youth at the most dangerous period of his life, plunged him into impurity, and the shame and misery by which it is accompanied. God was ever present with him in compassionate wrath, sprinkling bitter troubles on forbidden pleasures. He was in the hands of bad companions, and his friendship with them was a vicious friendship which would have been held disgraceful even in human judgments. In that climate and by the customs of that day he was of an age to marry, but his parents, eager for his intellectual progress and worldly advancement, did not seek to restrain his fervid passions within honourable bounds. Patricius, so generous in providing for his studies, was careless of his character. He did not wish his son's prospects to be impeded by a marriage bond. The thorns of lust grew higher than his head in that neglected garden of his soul, and there was no hand to pluck them up. His mother saw the danger he was in, and calling him aside, earnestly implored him to live a pure and honourable life. But he had learnt to despise a pure woman's exhortations, instead of accepting them as God's warning to him. When he heard his companions boasting of their iniquities, he

[1] The birthplace of Apuleius.

[2] Apul. *Florid.* iv. "Quae autem major laus et certior quam Carthagini bene dicere, ubi tota civitas eruditissimi estis?"

felt quite ashamed of not having gone to quite the same lengths, and wished to do wrong, not only from pleasure in the wrong, but from a desire for the shameful glory of such guilt. "I became," he says, "more vicious that I might not be blamed by them for virtue; and when I had done nothing flagitious enough to match their abandoned conduct, I pretended that I had done what I had not done, that my comparative innocence might not be comparative disgrace, and lest I should be more despised in proportion as I was more chaste." During this year Augustine recalls with shame an expedition which he made with his comrades to rob a pear-tree. The pears were not good; he did not want them; when he had got them he only flung them to the pigs; he had more and better at home: and yet, after playing with his friends till the dead of night, he joined them in an expedition to strip the tree out of sheer love of what his conscience condemned, and because he liked to join a multitude in doing wrong. A good many schoolboys have robbed orchards, but surely no other schoolboy expresses his remorse in language so heart-breaking as that used by this young African!

After this unfortunate year he went at the age of seventeen to Carthage. It was a splendid city, second in literary distinction to Rome alone;[1] but its streets, of which some were filled with magnificent temples, and others gleamed with gold and marble, did but conceal a deep moral degradation. As in Constantinople and Jerusalem, a nominal Christianity had refined the intellect without reforming the morals. The very Christianity of the place was ferocious, and the drunken revelry which had once disgraced the festivals of demons was now practised over the ashes of martyrs. Here Augustine plunged into the vilest dissipations of great cities, and the theatres which he frequented supplied at once the images of his misery and the fuel to his passions.[2] His words throw a dark and enigmatical shadow over his life, to which we need allude no further than to say that he confesses himself to have been no exception to the universal experience that "forbidden pleasure is deceitful and envenomed pleasure; its hollowness disappoints at the time; its consequences cruelly torture afterwards; its effects deprave for ever." "I was foul," he says, "and dishonourable, yet in my

[1] "Civitas ampla et illustris." *Ep.* xliii. 7.

[2] On the impure character of these spectacles, see Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, ii. 4; Lact. *Div. Instit.* xv. 6, sec. 31.

abounding vanity I strove to be elegant and polished." Even in the sacred precincts of the church he was guilty of entering into intrigues.[1] He rose to a high position in the school of the rhetoricians, but he sank at this period to the very nadir of unfaithfulness to God, whose mercy was yet hovering over him, and scourging him during these his offerings to devils. Yet even then he never joined the worst, and what would now be called the most "rowdy," class of Carthaginian students. There was a body of them known by the name of "subverters" (*Eversores*), whose despicable object it apparently was to introduce disorder and corruption into the classes of all the teachers. The shyness and reticence with which Augustine alludes to these youths makes us fear that they were guilty of worse excesses than mere disorder. Augustine admired their "deeds of devils" at a distance, and even enjoyed their friendship, but felt an "impudent shame" that he was not quite as bad and as senseless as they were. His father had died soon after he went to Carthage, but the generous friendship of a citizen of Tagaste named Romanianus enabled him to finish his course at the University, and in intellectual respects he does not seem to have wasted his opportunities. To Romanianus he always felt a warm gratitude. "When I was bereaved of my father, you," he says, "consoled me with your friendship, you encouraged me by your exhortations, you assisted me with your wealth."[2]

In reviewing these confessions we must, as in other cases, beware of being misled into thinking that Augustine was worse than multitudes of other young men of his day. The confessions of the holiest are ever the most bitter in their self-accusation, because saints have learnt to judge of their sins not by man's standard, but by Christ's. They read their condemnation not by the pale starlight of human judgment but by the light of the eye of God, which burns into the secrets of their hearts "ten thousand times brighter than the sun." In a public address delivered at Carthage many years later as bishop, he confessed that in that city he had most of all lived an evil life, and had been among the number of those whom the Apostle calls "fools," and to every good work reprobate.[3] Vincentius, a bishop of the

[1] The language he uses in the *Confessions*—especially in ii. 2 and iii. 1—has been interpreted as casting the very darkest shadow on his memory; but when we read the terms in which he expresses remorse for his schoolboy robbing of the pear-tree, we interpret his phrases with less severity.

[2] *C. Academ.* ii. 3.

[3] *Enarr. in Ps. xxxvi.* serm. 3, sec. 19.

Rogatistae in Carthage, in a letter to him when he was bishop, testifies that even during these godless years the world had regarded him before his conversion as an ardent student of literature, and a man of quiet and honourable demeanour.[1] But the heart knew its own bitterness if other men did not.

A gleam of higher aspiration was introduced into his heart by reading the *Hortensius* of Cicero. The book changed the current of his feelings, and awoke his desire for a better and worthier life. He resumed the habit of prayer, and felt some earnest strivings after God. But the benefit of this loftier influence was to a great extent counterbalanced by his falling into the heresy of the Manichees, in which he remained entangled for nine years. He turned to the Scriptures "to see what they were like," but he felt so complete a contempt for their simplicity, and the absence from them of the rhetorical graces which he had been taught to admire above everything, that he very soon threw them aside. The day was yet far distant when he saw Scripture "honeyed with heaven's honey and luminous with its light." His intellectual vanity had been greatly increased by his success in all his studies—geometry, music, poetry, and eloquence; but most of all by the ease with which he mastered the Categories of Aristotle entirely by himself, and that so thoroughly that he found he had nothing to learn from the oral explanations and diagrams of the best Carthaginian teachers. His swiftly-moving intellect and acumen were gifts of God, but he did not sanctify them to God's service.[2] The Bible was a dead letter to him because he did not bring to the study of it the requisite humility. Instead of coming to it as a humble enquirer he came as a haughty disputant, and so he closed against himself the door at which he would have been admitted if he had knocked in humble earnestness.[3]

Hence he fell more easily into the snares of the Manichees. Their "birdlime" was exactly tempered to win such a bird as he was. They frequently used the name of Jesus, and of the Comforter, but to them they were names only. Their constant cry was "the Truth! the Truth!" and Augustine, whom the noble eloquence of the *Hortensius* had specially inspired with a love for truth, passionately yearned to find the goal to which they declared that they alone could lead him. They pro-

[1] Inter Aug. *Ep.* xciii. sec. 51.
[2] *Conf.* iv. 16, secs. 28, 30.
[3] *Serm.* li. sec. 6.

fessed to live pure and holy lives, and they appealed at the same time to his natural pride of intellect. "The Church," they said, "*imposes* truth upon you instead of teaching it, and the truth which it offers is composed to a great extent of anile fables, which cannot be supported by the reason. The Church demands faith before reason, and terrifies you into submission by superstitious threats. We, on the other hand, only invite you to accept truths which we have first explained, and which you can perfectly understand." Besides this they had at command a multitude of criticisms and objections which charmed the conceit of a proud and garrulous youth fresh from the sophistic victories of the schools. Misinterpretation of Scripture furnished them with their strongest weapons. They raised arguments to which he could not reply from the discrepant genealogies of St. Matthew and St. Luke, which they declared to have been invented by heretics. They sneered and cavilled at large parts of the Old Testament. They had insuperable objections derived from the origin of evil, on which they founded the system of Dualism—of a good and an evil deity—a system which has had charms for so many millions of the human race. By such theories and reasonings they appealed to his pride and his intellect, nor did they leave ungratified his tendency to superstition. They had preposterous fancies about fruits, and while they taught Augustine to laugh at the works of prophets and evangelists as old wives' fables, they persuaded him to believe such pernicious nonsense as that vegetables have sentient life; "that a plucked fig weeps milky tears for the loss of its mother tree, and yet, that if a saint eats it after it has been plucked by the crime of another, he would receive angels —yea, even particles of the Divine—into his own system, and breathe them forth, whereas these particles of the true God would have been bound in the fruit if they were not loosed by the teeth and stomach of an elect saint"![1] But worse than all else, Augustine derived from their teaching a spirit of self-excuse for his own sins. They seemed less heinous when he was led to regard them as due not so much to his own will as to the external tyranny of some evil power.[2]

At first Augustine was so thoroughly entangled in the nets

[1] Augustine mentions this incredible foolishness in *Conf.* iii. 10, sec. 18.

[2] See these facts about the Manicheans in *De util. cred.* 2; *Conf.* iii. 6; *De Morib. Cath. Eccl.* i. 2; *De Gen. c. Manich.* i. 2, etc.

of this heresy that, "with a most wretched and most mad loquacity," he devastated the Catholic faith, and caught some of his best friends in the snare of logomachy in which he had himself been entangled.[1] His friend and pupil Alypius, his kind patron Romanianus, and Honoratus, who was not yet a Christian, were brought over by him into Manicheism.

For nine years Augustine continued to be a Manichean, and the system exercised a deep influence over his mind, even after he had abandoned it. Yet it never satisfied him. He found no real rest in it. He soon discovered that the Manicheans were far more successful in destructive than in constructive arguments. He found that they had little to offer him except such captious and profane questions as, "whether he supposed that God was corporeal, and had hands and nails?" or, "whether persons who committed murders, and had many wives, and offered animal sacrifices, were to be regarded as saints?" As long as they confined themselves to disparagement of the Old Testament, or to questions that bore upon insoluble mysteries, they seemed formidable; but they had little else to offer. The soul cannot live upon negations, or upon the monstrous hypothesis of two Gods, one good, one evil.[2] He would never become one of their "presbyters," or their "elect"; he was only a "hearer," and, as such, did not receive their baptism or attend their Eucharist, about which he could get no information. During his nineteenth and twenty-ninth years he was bidden to await the arrival at Carthage of their great bishop and champion Faustus; and during that period he held to the Manicheans mainly because an imperfect apprehension of the nature of Scripture and of the Catholic faith had left him unable to cope with their objections.

Another fatal influence during these years was of a moral character. When he was seventeen he formed an illicit union with a woman, with whom indeed he lived faithfully, but to whom he was never wedded. The following year she bore him a son, to whom he gave the name of Adeodatus, of whose precocious genius and early death we shall speak later on.

It is strange to our notions, and it shows the evil tendency to place orthodoxy above holiness, that while Monnica was unspeakably distressed by Augustine's heresy, we do not read

[1] *De Dono perseverant.* 53.

[2] *De Mor. Eccl. Cath.* 16: "Deus bonus fecit mundum, sed non Deus Veteris Testamenti, quod culpant, sed non intelligunt."

that she uttered a single word of remonstrance about his living for so many years in a state of concubinage. When her son became a Manichee, she indignantly excluded him altogether from her house and table,[1] but she afterwards re-admitted him to live under her roof, in spite of the immoral bond by which he was defamed. Much, of course, must be allowed for the differing moral standard of different ages and countries. The testimony of many authorities shows us that at this period concubinage had become common even among the clergy, whose marriage was discouraged by an ignorant public opinion. But the conscience of Augustine, though less tender on this subject than we might have expected, was not wholy seared. He fully recognised that he was living a life of sin.

Monnica wept over the young Manichee as sorely as though he were dead, and she offered to God her constant prayers for his conversion to the true faith. That conversion was long delayed, but she was not left without consolation. She had a dream which greatly comforted her. She dreamt that she was standing on a wooden rule (*regula*) overwhelmed with grief and sorrow, when she saw a youth approach her, resplendent, joyous, and with a smile upon his face. He asked her the reason of her sadness and her daily tears, and she answered that she was bewailing the perdition of her son. He bade her banish her anxiety, and to observe that where she was there her son was too. Turning to Augustine in her dream, she saw him standing near her on the same wooden rule. "Whence came this," he asks, "except because Thy ears, O Thou Merciful Omnipotent, were at her heart, O Thou who carest for each one of us as though caring for him alone, and carest for all as much as for each of us?" When Monnica related to him the dream, Augustine said it only showed that she would come over to his opinions. "Not so," she answered with quick intelligence, "the angel did not say to me 'where *he* is there you will be,' but 'where *you* are there he will be.'"

In her deep desire to win him from his errors, Monnica often entreated others to plead with him, and, among them, a faithful bishop who had been trained in the Scriptures. The bishop, however, with wise insight, declined to do so. He saw that nothing could be gained from a conflict with

[1] *Conf.* iii. 11, sec. 19: "Aversans et detestans blasphemias (filii)."

"The rattling tongue
Of saucy and audacious eloquence,"

in which the youth's pride might only be further inflamed by the semblance of a dialectic victory. "Leave him there," he said, "and only pray God for him; he will discover by reading what is his error, and how great his impiety. I was myself once a Manichee. I not only read nearly all their books, but even copied them out, and without any controversy I discovered how much that sect should be avoided." But Monnica still continued to entreat his assistance with floods of tears. Then, with a touch of impatience, he replied in memorable words, which she accepted as a voice from heaven: "Go," he said, "live so; it cannot be that the son of those tears will perish."

XVII

Continued

AUGUSTINE AS A MANICHEE

"In wandering mazes lost."—MILTON.

SECTION II

WHEN Augustine's education at Carthage was finished he returned to Tagaste, where he lived by giving literary instruction, which was called "teaching grammar."[1] His kind and generous patron Romanianus received him into his house, and they lived in such close intimacy that Augustine almost seemed to be a partner in the civil distinctions of his friend.[2] He compares himself at this period of his life to the Prodigal Son, shut out from the husks of the swine which he was feeding. Among his hearers was the excellent Alypius, a kinsman of Romanianus, son of one of the principal burghers of Tagaste, who afterwards became the Bishop of Tagaste, and was one of his lifelong friends.[3]

At Tagaste he had another friend, whose name is left unmentioned, but to whom he was bound by the closest attachment. They had been boys together, had gone to school together, had played together, had studied together as youths, and were completely one in heart and mind, lacking only the bond of mutual piety, which is indispensable for a pure and

[1] Possid. *Vit. Aug.* 1. In the *Confessions* Augustine does not follow strict chronological order.

[2] *C. Academ.* ii. 3.

[3] Some writers assert that this Alypius died young, and is a different person from the Bishop of Tagaste. I have not been able to find any proof for the statement. Alypius was a near kinsman of Romanianus (*Ep.* xxvii. 5, Paulin. *Epp.* iii. iv. viii.)

perfect friendship. Augustine had dragged this friend with him from the true faith into the pernicious falsities of Manicheism. The young man fell dangerously ill, and while he lay in a deep torpor he was baptized without his previous consent. Augustine did not oppose the baptism, because he felt sure that if his friend recovered he would hold fast to the principles of Manicheism. He did recover, and Augustine, who was constantly at his bedside, took the earliest opportunity to laugh at his baptism. But he, with a sudden outburst of independence, rebuked Augustine, and said that if he spoke in that manner again their friendship must cease. A few days later he had a relapse, and died. So bitter and overwhelming was the grief of Augustine that he seemed to see death everywhere. He wept abundantly, but he could not pray. Life at Tagaste became insupportable to him, and his anguish was the more poignant because it was so extremely self-observant. He could not get rid of the fatal luxury of his woe. In order to escape from a place where every sight and sound reminded him of what he had lost, he threw up his employment and returned to Carthage. His heart was peculiarly formed for friendship. Nothing on earth seemed to him so sweet as to talk and laugh together with his friends; to exchange benefits; to read eloquent books; to be serious or to trifle; to differ occasionally without animosity, and to find all the greater delight in constant agreement; to teach and to learn in turns; to long for the absent with regret, to welcome their visits with joy, to gaze on their faces, to grasp their hands, to hear their words.[1]

At Carthage he exchanged the drudgery of a grammarian for the more distinguished post of a teacher of rhetoric, and until he was able to make his own way Romanianus supplied his needs.[2] "I taught," he says, "in those years the art of rhetoric and victorious loquacity for gain. Yet my chief desire was to have good pupils, to whom without wiliness I taught wiles, not that they might injure the innocent, but might sometimes defend the guilty."[3] His desire for good pupils was not quite in vain, for he numbered among them two promising sons of Romanianus, as well as Eulogius, who afterwards became a distinguished teacher at Carthage, and Alypius, whom he regarded as both good and learned.[4] The father of Alypius had quarrelled with Augustine,

[1] *Conf.* iv. 8, sec. 13. [2] *C. Academ.* ii. 3. [3] *Conf.* iv. 2, sec. 2.
[4] *C. Academ.* ii. 16; *De cura pro mort.* 13.

and for some time the youth did not like to attend his lectures. Augustine heard with sorrow that he had become passionately fond of the games of the circus, but, from the relations between them, and because he thought that the youth sided with his father, he was unable to warn him either as a tutor or as a friend. Soon, however, Alypius began to come and hear his lectures again, going away directly he had finished. One day Augustine was sitting with his pupils round him in the open air when Alypius joined them. Augustine happened to be explaining some book which led him quite accidentally to allude to the Circensian games, and he spoke of them with derisive sarcasm, without even thinking of the presence of Alypius. Alypius might have been offended, but instead of that he showed the truth of the proverb of Solomon, "Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee."[1] From that day forward he abandoned the games, felt a deeper love for Augustine, who had delivered him from such a temptation, and persuaded his father to let him become his pupil once more. Won by the ostentation of continence which prevailed among the Manichees, Alypius also joined Augustine in his heretical communion.

The prize of a crown was annually given at Carthage for the best poem, and for this prize Augustine determined to compete. When this became known a Pagan augur came to him and asked him what he would give to win the crown by his magic arts. Augustine rejected the offered magic with indignation, and told the augur that if the crown were even golden and immortal, he would not have so much as a fly killed on his behalf; for he believed that the augur wished to invoke the demons in his favour by animal sacrifices. He won the prize, however, and the crown was placed on his head by the Proconsul Vindicianus.

There was at Carthage a diviner named Albicerius, who, though he was a man of disgraceful character, was consulted even by persons of eminence. One day a pupil of Augustine's challenged Albicerius to tell him of what he was thinking. "A verse of Virgil," was the reply. It was actually the case, and he then asked, "What verse?" Albicerius was a man of no education, yet he at once repeated the verse. On another occasion a gentleman of proconsular rank named Flaccianus was thinking of buying a farm, and asked Albicerius whether he could advise him about a matter which he had on hand. Albicerius at once

[1] Prov. ix. 8.

replied, "You are thinking of buying the farm at ——," mentioning the name of the place, though it was so out of the way that even Flaccianus could scarcely remember it.[1] We who are accustomed to thought-reading and conjuring tricks should hardly place Albicerius so high as Cagliostro or Robert Houdin; but Flaccianus and Augustine attributed his responses to some abject demon, and advised every one to keep aloof from him.

Augustine for many years believed in astrology and studied horoscopes; and all the more because it was comforting to a guilty conscience to lay the blame of his misdoing on the constellation under which he was born. He believed that the answers of astrologers were often correct, and he could find no clear explanation of the fact. In vain his friend Nebridius, a youth of great capacity, ridiculed the whole science. In vain Vindicianus, who was a distinguished physician, advised him to leave such studies alone and to earn his livelihood solely by rhetoric, telling him that he had himself thoroughly studied astrology, and had once meant to earn his bread by it, but had found it to be a baseless imposture. Augustine never quite abandoned his belief in it, till once when he was consulted by a dear friend of much distinction named Firminus, who asked him to find out if the constellations favoured some ambitious hope which he then entertained. Augustine replied that he would do so, though he was now more than half persuaded that there was nothing to be learned from such enquiries. Firminus, though he retained a belief which he had learnt from his father, told a story about himself which finally convinced Augustine to abandon astrology. He said that at the very instant of his own birth a slave of his mother's had also brought forth a son. The horoscope of the two infants must, therefore, have been entirely identical, and yet Firminus had grown up in wealth, rank, and honour, while the sharer in his natal moment continued to be at that moment a poor and humble slave. This story, and the reflexion that Esau and Jacob, who were so widely different in their destinies, must have had exactly the same horoscopes, completed the deliverance of Augustine from an empty superstition. Henceforth he attributed correct predictions of astrology to the same accident which often gives significance to the Sortes Biblicae and the Sortes Virgilianae.[2]

Augustine always retained a certain amount of cautious belief

[1] *C. Academ.* i. 17, 18. [2] *Conf.* iv. 3, sec. 5, vii. 6, 7.

in the intimations of dreams. In one of his later letters, in answer to a question of Evodius about the soul, he tells a story of a "beloved physician" at Carthage named Gennadius, who, though a good man and earnest in his beneficence to the poor, had doubts about the future life. His doubts were entirely removed by two dreams. One night he dreamt that a noble-looking youth came to him and said, "Follow me." He followed, and was led to a city in which he heard strains of delicious music and hymns and psalms, and the youth told him that this was the singing of the blessed. Awaking, he found it was a dream, and attached no importance to it. But on another night the same youth came again and asked, "Do you remember me?" "Yes," answered Gennadius. "I saw you in my dream, and you took me to hear the songs of the blessed." "Are you dreaming now?" "Yes." "Where is your body at this moment?" "In my bed." "Your eyes, then, are closed and bound in sleep?" "Yes." "How is it, then, that you see me?" Gennadius could give no answer, and the angel said, "Just as you see me without the eyes of the flesh, so it will be when all your senses are removed by death. Take care that henceforth you have no doubts about the life to come." You may say that this was a dream, adds Augustine, and any one may think what he likes about it. Nevertheless there are, he implies, some dreams which have a Divine significance.[1]

This dream of Gennadius is narrated in reply to a letter of Evodius in which he had mentioned the story of a young notary of Uzalis, of which town Evodius was bishop. The boy was the son of a presbyter, and showed such skill, diligence, and promise, that the bishop employed him as his reader and secretary. He had desired to die early, and as he lay dying he sang

"Desiderat et properat anima mea ad atria Dei,"

and

"Impinguasti in oleo caput meum, et poculum tuum inebrians quam praeclarum est."

He signed himself with the cross, and died a virginal youth. Two days after a widow named Urbica saw in a dream a deacon, who had died four years before, preparing a palace of silver which he said was to be the dead youth's home, and then an old

[1] *Ep.* clix.

man dressed in white ordered two angels in white robes to lift the youth's body to heaven; after which roses, known by the name of virgin roses, began to blossom on his tomb. The youth himself had seen before his death the vision of a young friend who said that he had come to fetch him; and his father the presbyter was warned of his own approaching death by visions of the dead youth both to himself and to a brother-monk. Augustine is very much pleased with the story, but professes his inability to offer any adequate explanation.[1]

At the age of twenty-six or twenty-seven Augustine wrote his first book. It was *On the Fitting and the Beautiful*, and is no longer extant. He dedicated it to a Roman orator named Hierius, who was personally unknown to him, but whose works and sayings he admired.

When he was twenty-nine he began to be greatly shaken in his Manichean opinions. A certain suspicion about the practices of the elders had prevented him from ever assuming any rank beyond that of "hearer," which was the lowest in their order. He had indeed seen nothing of those impure mysteries with which Epiphanius charged them, and which they perhaps regarded, at least in some of their sects, as necessary concessions to the evil power. But during nine years it had been his unvarying experience that every one of their "elect" who was personally known to him had either been detected in vice, or had given grounds for grave suspicion. On one occasion he had seen more than three of the elect, who lived in different houses, walking together in the streets of Carthage after one of their meetings; and they behaved in a manner so shamefully immoral that Augustine and others who witnessed their misconduct saw that they exercised no restraint upon each other's conduct. A complaint was made, but they were left entirely unpunished, evidently from a dread of what they might reveal. On another occasion, when a vigil was being observed, the lights were suddenly put out, and a number of the elect were charged with conduct which even Pagans would have condemned as disgraceful. These, and many other flagitious circumstances, which he relates in his book *On the Character of the Manicheans*, entirely shook his faith in their professions of temperance, soberness, and chastity.[2] He saw their leaders to be envious, avaricious, quarrelsome, slanderous, and addicted to the dangerous vices of city life. He was further

[1] *Epp.* clviii. clix.

[2] *De Mor. Manich.* 68, 75.

confirmed in his belief that the Manichees were insincere by the total failure of a fervent and wealthy "hearer" named Constantius to establish at Rome a sort of monastery in which the best of the elect should be maintained at his expense, and should live, really as well as professedly, under the rules of Manes. At first none of the Manichean bishops would support him, but at length he explained his plan to a rustic bishop who was willing to join him. A community of the elect was then formed, but a very short experience was sufficient to stamp it with hopeless failure. The elect soon began to quarrel vehemently among themselves, and to denounce each other for the worst crimes; and at last they came in a body and declared that the new rules were absolutely intolerable. "They must either be capable of being kept," answered Constantius, "or our founder must have been an utter fool." The community broke up; the bishop fled. After his flight it was found that he had a bag full of money, and that from this secret store he had supplied himself with food in habitual defiance of the rule. Constantius then headed the Manichean schism of the Matterii, so called because they slept on mats; but shortly after he embraced the Catholic faith and was still living when Augustine wrote his books against Faustus.[1]

Augustine was further shaken in his heresy by intellectual doubts. There came to Carthage a lecturer named Helpidius who advanced Scriptural arguments to which the Manichees were only able to whisper among their hearers the baseless answer that the New Testament had been largely interpolated—an assertion in favour of which they could not adduce a single manuscript.[2] He felt, too, that they did not, after all, solve the tremendous difficulty about the origin of evil. If the soul was a particle of God, why should He have placed it in mortal bodies which belonged to the devil? Nebridius had an argument which seemed to him decisive. He asked the Manichees "what the powers of evil would have done to God if He had not struggled against them?" If they could have done Him harm, then God must be violable and corruptible; if He was beyond their power, why should He have mingled with their matter a portion of Himself? In fact, Augustine was beginning to doubt whether matter was essentially evil, and the puerile answer, that "if a man held a scorpion in

[1] *C. Faust.* v. 5; *De Mor. Manich.* 74, 75.
[2] *Conf.* v. 11, sec. 21; *De util. cred.* 7; *C. Fortunat.* ii. 37.

his hand he would find it evil enough," only disgusted him.[1] He began to think that the philosophers, especially the Academics, were far abler than the Manichees, and that their science at any rate was far more rational and correct. He was bidden, however, to await the coming of Faustus, who would triumphantly vindicate the doctrine of Manes and make everything clear.

Augustine was twenty-nine when Faustus at last arrived. He was an African of the town of Milevis. His birth was obscure, but his ability had raised him to the position of the chief bishop of the Manichees. He boasted that he had abandoned all things—even father and mother and wife and children—for the Gospel's sake; that he had neither silver nor gold nor brass in his purse; that he had no care for the morrow, what he should eat or wherewithal he should be clothed, and that he had fulfilled and experienced all the beatitudes for the truth's sake. In spite of which he slept on downy couches, was softly clad, and lived with a luxury which not only displeased the Mattarii, but was far beyond the condition of his birth. The only persecution he braved was a short and easy deportation with some of his followers to a certain island. He knew something of "grammar," but in all the other sciences his attainments were exceedingly moderate. Besides the Manichean writings he had only read some orations of Cicero, a very few books of Seneca, and some of the poets. He was, however, a graceful and fluent speaker, and habitual practice enabled him to trick out commonplaces in a sort of silvery and attractive eloquence, which was rendered more effective by his apparent modesty and sincerity. He had written a book against the God of the Old Testament and the Incarnation, which, when it fell into Augustine's hands, he was able to refute word for word. To many Faustus was a "snare of death," but without his knowledge and against his will he finally emancipated Augustine from the net of heresy.

For Augustine saw through him. Personally he liked him, and he was pleased with the modest readiness with which Faustus expressed his entire disability to help Augustine in any of the pseudo-scientific Manichean questions, or any of his more recondite spiritual difficulties. He conversed and read with Faustus, but finding that this boasted champion had so little to say in defence of essential doctrines, he gave up all intention of penetrating any deeper into the mysteries of the sect.

[1] *De Mor. Manich.* 11.

XVII

Continued

AUGUSTINE AT ROME

Attende ubi albescit veritas."—*Conf.* xi. 27.

SECTION III

A GREAT change was now at hand. Augustine was entirely weary of Carthage, and made up his mind to go to Rome. He was not wholly insensible to the arguments of his friends that there he would win greater fame and a larger income, but his chief inducement was the humiliation caused him by the turbulent folly of the "upsetters," those young Mohawks of Carthage. These silly youths, protected by a bad custom, were allowed to burst into the classes of any professor whom they chose to disturb, and there to break up the lecture and ruin all discipline. He is ashamed to think that he had associated with these noisy gangs in his own student days, though he had not approved of their proceedings; but now that he was a teacher they rendered his life miserable. His enemies afterwards charged him with having been driven from Africa by the decree of the Proconsul Messianus against the Manichees, a calumny which he was easily able to refute because that decree was not promulgated till a year later.[1]

Knowing that he should encounter considerable opposition, and especially from his mother, he kept secret his purpose of sailing to Italy. Romanianus, who had helped him with such ungrudging kindness, and whose son Augustine was leaving at Carthage, was indignant that he had not been consulted; but Augustine succeeded in explaining to him his reasons, and the

[1] *C. Litt. Petiliani*, iii. 30.

two continued to be warm friends.[1] Monnica discovered his intention, and when he started determined to leave Tagaste with him, either to bring him home with her or at all costs to accompany him. In vain he tried to deceive her by saying that he was only going to see the last of a friend who was about to sail. She declined to return home, and at last he only escaped by a discreditable *ruse*. He persuaded her to land and pass the night in a chapel consecrated to the memory of the martyr Cyprian. There she spent the hours of darkness in tears and in prayer to God that he would prevent the voyage of her son. Augustine meanwhile had secretly withdrawn himself, and spread his sails for Rome with a favouring wind. She filled the shore with her lamentations, upbraiding him for his cruelty and fraud. When her mind was calmer she returned home and never ceased to pray for him; and the time came when she and her son alike recognised in all these events the invisible guidance of the hand of love.

At Rome he was the guest of a Manichean who, like himself, was a "hearer," and he was thrown almost exclusively into the society of the Manichees and their "elect." Although he warned his host against the acceptance of all their fables, he still clung to their pestilent doctrine that sin was an involuntary action, and therefore needed no repentance. He was hindered, too, by the falsehood, which the heretics had instilled into him, that the Catholic Church believed God to be corporeal, a doctrine which he despised.[2] But he became more and more inclined to adopt the views of the Academics, that assent about most things should be held in suspense, and that truth is in reality undiscoverable.

His stay at Rome was short. He arrived in 383, and soon found that the profession of a teacher in the capital of the Empire was attended with disadvantages still more serious than those which had driven him from the capital of Africa. He was free indeed from the boisterous incursions of the *Eversores*, which were forbidden by the Roman law; but on the other hand the Roman students had a disgraceful way of cheating the professors of their fees. When they had learnt as much as they could, they conspired together and passed in a body to another lecture-room, without discharging their debt to the first teacher, so that Augustine found himself in a worse case than before. This position was

[1] *C. Acad.* ii. sec. 3. The passage is a warm eulogy on one who seems to have been a truly noble and generous man.

[2] *Conf.* v. 10, sec. 20; vi. 2, sec. 4.

rendered all the more trying by the vapid nature of the instruction which he proposed to give, and which he afterwards described as consisting in a "*miserrima et furiosissima loquacitas.*"

From this serious difficulty he was liberated by his most opportune election to a professorship at Milan. The nomination to this post had been placed in the hands of the distinguished Pagan statesman and man of letters, Symmachus, who, after hearing Augustine deliver a public declamation, placed the office at his disposal. He had appealed to his Manichean friends to interest themselves in his favour, and they little suspected that one of his motives in desiring to go to Milan was to get rid of them. His success seemed to open to him a new career. He was to be transported to Milan without expense in the public vehicles, and was to have a fixed salary in addition to his fees.

To Milan, accordingly, he went in 385, and there he was speedily joined by his friend Alypius, whose experiences at Rome had been very trying. He had gone thither at the wish of his parents to study the law, and had determined never to be present at one of the cruel and hated gladiatorial spectacles. One day, however, he met some friends who were returning from a dinner, and they with familiar violence declared that they would take him to the amphitheatre, where the deadly games were then being exhibited. "You may drag my body there," he said, when be had tried in vain to resist them, "but you cannot drag either my eyes or my mind to these horrors. So I shall be at once present and absent, and shall conquer both you and them." In spite of this they took him with them, to see whether his firmness would hold out. On entering they secured places, and found the vast multitude passionately absorbed in the fierce delight. Alypius closed his eyes, and forbade his mind to share in such crimes; but alas, he did not also close his ears! At some thrilling crisis of the combat he was startled by the mighty shout of the spectators, and while still determined to hate and despise whatever he should see, he was driven by curiosity to open his eyes. Instantly, says Augustine, his soul received a deadlier wound than that of the poor gladiator who was being

"Butchered to make a Roman holiday."[1]

[1] Lord Houghton describes the scene in his "Fall of Alypius."

"The love of contest and the lust of blood
Dwell in the depths of man's original heart,

For when he saw the rush of crimson over the victim's armour he was swept away by the wild excitement. He became, as it were, drunk with the savage passion for blood. No longer averting his eyes, he gazed heart and soul on the brutal scene before him, indifferent to the guilt and intoxicated with the remorseless pleasure of the contest. He was no longer the Alypius who had entered the amphitheatre, but one of the crowd to which he had joined himself, and a true companion of those whom he had resisted. It is needless to say more. He gazed, he shouted, his soul took fire, and he took away with him a frenzy by which he was stimulated to return, not only with those who had forced him there, but even before them and taking others with him. Nor was it till long afterwards that God rescued him from this new peril.[1]

Alypius had another very disagreeable adventure. Augustine had taught him the custom of walking about while he prepared a speech, and for this purpose he had gone at noonday into the forum. He was pacing by himself in front of the tribunal with his tablets and stylus, when another student entered unnoticed with an axe in his hand. His object was to steal the lead from the fencing which projected over the street of the

> And at mere shows and names of wise and good
> Will not from their barbaric homes depart,
> But half-asleep await their time, and then
> Bound forth like tigers from their jungle-den.
>
> "And all the curious wicker-work of thought,
> Of logical result and learned skill,
> Of precepts with examples interwrought,
> Of high ideals and determinate will,
> The careful fabric of ten thousand hours
> Is crushed beneath the moment's brutal powers.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "The rage subsided; the deep sandy floor
> Sucked the hot blood; the hook like some vile prey
> Dragged off the noble body of the Moor.
> The victor, doomed to die some other day,
> Enjoyed the plaudits purposelessly earned—
> And back Alypius to himself returned."

[1] *Conf.* vi. 7, sec. 13. The following fine passage from a recent poet will illustrate the fierce passion for the games which swayed so many Roman hearts :—

> "Marcus, abiding in Jerusalem,
> Greeting to Caius, his best friend in Rome!
> *Salve!* these presents will be borne to you
> By Lucius, who is wearied with this place,
> Sated with travel, looks upon the East
> As simply hateful—blazing, barren, bleak—
> And longs again to find himself in Rome.
> After the tumult of its streets, its trains
> Of slaves and clients, and its villas cool

silversmiths.[1] These artisans heard the blows of the axe and sent for the *aeditimi*, who acted as police of the forum, to arrest the depredator. He heard them coming, dropped his axe, and fled. Alypius noticed his hasty exit, and curious as to the reason of his flight, went to the spot. Seeing the axe there he picked it up and looked at it. At that moment the officers came in and seized him. The circumstantial evidence against him looked very strong. The blows of an axe had been heard, and he had been caught alone on the spot with an axe in his hand. Regarding him as a thief who had been detected *flagrante delicto*, the scum of the forum gathered round him, and he was taken off to the judge. His imprisonment and punishment seemed certain, and everything was going against him, when fortunately the captors and crowd were met by an architect who had special charge of the public buildings. They were delighted to show him the ostensible culprit in the thefts of which they had themselves been frequently suspected. The architect had met Alypius in the house of a senator, and recognising him took him by the hand. Leading him aside, he learned the true facts of the case. He ordered the turbulent crowd to follow him, and they went to the house of the youth who had been really guilty. Before the door of the house they found a little slave-boy whom Alypius had seen following the student as a page. The boy was too young to be on his guard, and when they showed him the axe and asked whose it was, he at once answered "It is ours," and

With marble porticoes beside the sea,
And friends and banquets,—more than all, its games,—
This life seems blank and flat. He pants to stand
In its vast circus all alive with heads
And quivering arms and floating robes,—the air
Thrilled by the roaring *fremitus* of men,—
The sunlit awning heaving overhead,
Swollen and strained against its corded veins,
And flapping out its hem with loud report,—
The wild beasts roaring from the pit below,—
The wilder crowd responding from above
With one long yell that sends the startled blood
With thrill and sudden flush into the cheeks,—
A hundred trumpets screaming,—the dull thump
Of horses galloping across the sand,—
The clang of scabbards, the sharp clash of steel,—
Live swords, that whirl a circle of gray fire,—
Brass helmets flashing 'neath their streaming hair,—
A universal tumult,—then a hush
Worse than the tumult—all eyes straining down
To the arena's pit—all lips set close—
All muscles strained,—and then that sudden yell,
Habet!—That's Rome, says Lucius: so it is!
That is, 'tis *his* Rome,—'tis not yours and mine."

[1] Cancelli plumbei.

on being cross-examined told the whole story. Thus the friend of Augustine was saved from the degradation of being condemned as *a common thief*.

In spite of these adventures Alypius had risen to great distinction. He was appointed an assessor to the Count of the Italian Treasury, and had proved both that he was incorruptible and that he was courageous. A very powerful senator, who was much feared by many, endeavoured to secure for himself an illegal privilege. Alypius boldly resisted the claim and contemptuously spurned the bribe which was offered him, although even the Count of the Treasury had not ventured openly to refuse the senator's request, and had indeed purposely devolved the responsibility upon his youthful and courageous deputy. Alypius was indeed nearly tempted by the privilege of having books copied for him at Praetorian prices, "but consulting justice he altered his determination for the better, esteeming equity whereby he was hindered more gainful than the power whereby he was allowed. These are slight things," says Augustine, "but he that is faithful in little is faithful also in much."[1]

[1] The feeling of horror at the gladiatorial games was felt by most Christians long before the grand self-sacrifice of St. Telemachus led to their abolition. Prudentius, in his reply to Symmachus and his invective against Paganism, says to the Emperor Honorius :—

"Nullus in urbe cadat cujus sit poena voluptas!
Jam solis contenta feris infamis arena
Nulla cruentatis homicidia ludat in armis!"
C. Symm. ii. 1126.

XVII

Continued

THE CONVERSION OF AUGUSTINE

"Fecisti nos ad Te."—Aug. *Conf.*

SECTION IV

Arrived at Milan, Augustine took the earliest opportunity to go and hear the great Bishop Ambrose. "I was led to him," he says, "unknowingly by God, that I might knowingly be led to God by him." Ambrose received him with fatherly kindness, and Augustine felt himself powerfully attracted by his commanding personality. He loved him at first, not as a teacher of truth, but as one who was kind towards himself. He stood in the crowded basilica and listened with pleasure to his sermons, but merely because they were eloquent and attractive.[1] He found them less polished and silvery than those of Faustus, but incomparably superior in thought and matter. Almost without his knowing it, the meaning of what Ambrose said, as well as his language, became to him a matter of interest. Two things he learnt which were to him of inestimable value. The Manichees had always assured him that the Catholics believed in a corporeal God, and that this was their interpretation of the verse, "In the image of God made He him." This he found to be an ignorant misinterpretation, and the discovery brought a deep sense of relief to his mind. Then, too, he caught his first glimpse of a way whereby to get rid of the difficulties with which Manichean criticism had surrounded the Old Testament. Ambrose had learnt from the teaching of Origen that the key to interpretation

[1] Possid. *Vit. Aug.* i. "Frequentissimis in ecclesia disputationibus astans in populo intendebat suspensus atque affixus."

of Scripture was the method of allegorising, and the text, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life," was constantly on his lips.[1] The key was not the right one, and the text was entirely misapplied from its original sense; but it took the world a thousand years more to learn the true principles of exegesis, and meanwhile a very partial truth was the providential means by which Augustine was delivered from decided errors.

His deliverance was hastened by the arrival of Monnica, who, with devoted affection, took Navigius, her younger son, and followed her elder son to Milan. Monnica almost lived in the Ambrosian basilica, and nothing could exceed her joy when Augustine informed her that, though not a Catholic, he had at any rate ceased to be a Manichee, and had offered himself as a catechumen in the Church of his mother. Ambrose formed a high opinion of Monnica, and spoke of her to Augustine with warm praise. Augustine continued to be a constant hearer of his sermons, and longed for some opportunity to lay before him all his doubts and hesitations. Ambrose was perfectly accessible. The door of his house was open, and any one who wished might come to see him unannounced. But he was besieged by such a crowd of visitors, and so constantly occupied in business, that Augustine never found an opportunity for a lengthened conversation, for, when the business of the day was finished, he always found Ambrose reading so diligently and so devoutly that he did not like to disturb him. The only question which he had the chance of asking was one in which he felt no interest, and only asked at his mother's request.[2] It had been a custom in the African Church to fast on Saturday, and Monnica found an opposite custom prevalent at Milan. When Augustine questioned Ambrose on the subject, he wisely replied that in such a matter it was best to follow the practices of the Church to which a person belonged at the time.[3] This comparatively trivial matter

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 6.

[2] To Monnica the wish of Ambrose was law. In Africa she had been accustomed to offer vegetables and bread and wine at the feasts of the martyrs, and when she came to the door of the church in Milan to do the same, she was informed that Ambrose disapproved of the custom, partly because it too closely resembled the *parentalia* of the heathen, and partly because it fostered the temptation to drunkenness. She at once abandoned the custom, and gave to the poor instead (*Conf.* vi. 2).

[3] *Ep.* xxxvi. 32. Jerome gave an almost identical answer to Lucinius, and quotes Hippolytus to the same effect. He quotes Rom. xiv. 5, Vulg. "Quisque abundet in sensu suo."

was the only one on which he was able to get the private advice of the great bishop. He was far from happy. Much of his time was occupied with pupils. He had no leisure to read as Ambrose did, and he had no money to buy books, and he was sinking into a settled despair as to the possibility of finding truth, or of ordering his divided life in a way to give him any satisfaction. His friends shared his perplexities. Nebridius had abandoned home and all things else for the sake of living with him, but he had not yet offered himself for baptism. Alypius, in resisting alike the bribes and the threats which had assailed his legal office, had shown the innocence and integrity of his soul. But there was a magnetism in the character of Augustine which prevented his friends from advancing farther than himself. What he was, they were ; and though it was now nearly twelve years since his ardour had been kindled by reading the *Hortensius*, he seemed to himself to have made no real progress.

At one time the little band of friends had seriously discussed a plan for founding a sort of philosophic community in which they could live a coenobitic life, and devote themselves to contemplation afar from the troubles of the world. Romanianus, who had been brought to Milan by a lawsuit, and whose wealth rendered the plan feasible, entirely approved of it. But a fatal objection arose. Some of them were married, others intended to marry. What was to be done with their wives ?

Augustine himself thought it best to marry, and his mother urged him to do so. He admired Ambrose, and thought that the career of such a man, whose piety had won him such a great place in the Empire, was extremely to be envied ; but he would not purchase even this at the price of celibacy. The infatuation to which he had been brought by a course which his own conscience had always condemned affected even Alypius, who would have been entirely content to live unmarried had it not been that Augustine declared it to be impossible for himself.

Accordingly, they looked out for and found a young girl who had a little money of her own, and to whom Augustine was to be married in two years, as she was not yet old enough for wedlock. We pass over with shame one of the worst acts of his life. It was a condition of the marriage that he should send away the woman with whom he had lived so long, and to whom he was deeply attached. He sent her away from her son Adeodatus, and from himself, with whom she had lived faithfully

though not in marriage. She vowed that she would return to Africa, and live thenceforth a life of perfect purity. He dismissed her, and never mentions her again. It is impossible not to compassionate this wronged, patient, helpless, forgotten victim; impossible to suppress a movement of indignation against the cold selfishness with which Augustine treated her, as

> "Into the dark she glides, a silent shame
> And a veiled memory, without a name.
> And the world knoweth not what words she prayed,
> With what her wail before the altar wept,
> What tale she told, what penitence she made,
> What measure by her beating heart was kept.
> Nor in what vale or mountain the earth lies
> Upon the passionate Carthaginian's eyes.
>
> "Well that one penitent hath found such grace
> As to be silent in the silent years,
> That no light hand hath lifted from her face
> The silver veil, enwoven by her tears;
> Well that one book at least, at least one sod,
> Keeps close one tender secret of our God."

And yet he was so deeply entangled in the effeminacy of guilty self-indulgence that he formed another illicit union until his future bride should be old enough to marry. Monnica, little understanding the nature of sin, and sharing the mechanical view of the sacraments which was already universal, thought that when he was once safely married he could be baptized, and that baptism would wash away all previous transgressions. Even in his present strange condition he often entreated his mother to ask God to give her, by a dream, some indication about the future marriage; but she only saw vain and fantastic images which she could not mistake for Divine guidance.

But every successive incident of his life was now hastening him to the conversion which was only delayed by his sinful passions. On one occasion he was intensely anxious about a public panegyric which he was to pronounce upon the young Emperor Valentinian before a crowded assembly. While his mind was full of the lies which he meant to utter, and which the multitude of his admiring auditors *knew* to be lies, he saw in a street of Milan a drunken beggar, and, in the foul and transient hilarity of this poor wretch, he saw an image of his own worldly

desires. He felt inclined to adopt the views of Epicurus, that happiness was the sole end of life; and was only prevented from doing so by that fear of future retribution which he had never been able to shake off. He gradually acquired a truer knowledge of God, and, from Platonic books which the orator Victorinus had translated into Latin, he gained some conception of the Eternal Logos, though not as yet of the Incarnate Word. The study of St. Paul increased his knowledge, and abated his pride.[1] Every good impression which he had received was deepened by a visit to the presbyter Simplicianus, the spiritual father of Ambrose and his ultimate successor. Simplicianus had been well acquainted with Victorinus, and when Augustine mentioned that he had been reading his translation from Plato, Simplicianus gave him the story of the great orator's conversion. He had been a heathen, and numbered among his pupils some of the noblest senators of Rome, who, in their gratitude, had erected him a statue in the forum. A diligent though secret study of the Scriptures had changed his views, and coming to Simplicianus, he had said to him, "You may now know that I am a Christian." "I will believe it," said Simplicianus, "when I s̄ee you in church.' "What," said Victorinus, "do *walls* make Christians?" The same remark was always met by the same reply, for Victorinus did not dare to offend his crowds of friends and admirers. At last, however, he feared that if he denied Christ on earth Christ would deny him in heaven, and said to Simplicianus, "Let us go to the church; I wish to become a Christian." Shortly afterwards he received public baptism, to the astonishment of Rome and the joy of the Church. When he entered the church there was a loud murmur of "Victorinus! Victorinus!" then a deep silence as he rose to pronounce the profession of his faith; and then they carried him home with shouts of congratulation. When Julian passed his edict forbidding Christians to teach heathen literature, Victorinus had crowned his self-sacrifice by closing his school. Augustine longed to make a similar offering to God, but he was enchained by his besetting sin. Perverse will had brought forth lust; lust yielded to had become habit; habit unresisted had developed into the linked fetters of a fatal and slavish though imaginary necessity.

He was yet more deeply moved by a conversation with Pontitianus, a fellow-countryman, who held high military rank in the

[1] *C. Acad.* ii. 5, sec. 6.

palace. He was alone with Alypius, whose assessorship had ended, when Pontitianus came to see them. A table for playing some game was before them, and on it lay a book. When Pontitianus took it up he found to his surprise that it contained the Epistles of St. Paul. He was a Christian, and smiling at Augustine, he congratulated him on such studies. They began to talk on Christian subjects, and among other things Pontitianus told them the story of the hermit St. Antony, of whom they had never even heard. The ardent souls of the young men were intensely interested by all that their friend had to tell them about the sainted eremite, and he proceeded to talk to them about monasteries and the lives of monks, of which they had heard nothing, not even being aware that Ambrose was the patron of a monastery just outside the walls of Milan. He then told them that once at Trèves he and three of his brother officers had gone to walk in some gardens near the walls, and that two of them, separating from the rest, had entered a cottage of poor monks in which they found a *Life of Antony*. They were so deeply impressed by it that one of them asked his comrade why they should not at once abandon the path of ambition and become friends and servants of God. Together they made the vow that they would do so, and when Pontitianus came to tell them that it was now dark and they must return, they told him the marvellous change which had now decided their future course. Pontitianus and his friend wept, yet congratulated them, and entreating them for their prayers, returned to the palace. Both of them were betrothed, but they left their future brides, who, fired with the same enthusiasm, took on themselves the vow of perpetual virginity.

The effect of this narrative upon the mind of Augustine was overwhelming. He felt himself a new man. In earlier days he had prayed to God to make him pure, with the secret wish that his prayer might not yet be heard. Now he poured forth that prayer with all his heart. In a tumult of agitation he exclaimed to Alypius, "What is our state? What have you heard? What is this? The unlearned rise and take heaven by force, and we, with our learning but without heart, see we are rolling ourselves in flesh and blood! Do we blush to follow because they have gone before, and do we not blush not at least to follow?" Alypius looked on him with astonishment. His emotion was beyond all wont; his forehead, cheeks, eyes, colour, and tones of

voice were more eloquent than his words. Their house had a little garden attached to it, and Augustine rushed into it followed by Alypius. They sat down as far from the house as possible, and there Augustine, with Alypius sitting silently beside him, fought out the battle with his own tumultuous soul. But even the presence of Alypius, who shared all his secrets, became too much for him. "A violent storm," he says, "raged within me, bringing with it a flood of tears," and he retired into a still more solitary place. Rising once more he flung himself under a fig tree in an agony of remorse, exclaiming, "How long, O Lord, how long? Remember not my former sins! To-morrow and to-morrow—why not now? Why should there not be in this hour an end of my baseness?" In the midst of his agitated prayer he heard the voice of a child, whether boy or girl he knew not, singing again and again the words, "*Tolle, lege; tolle, lege*"—"take, read; take, read." Believing this to be a Divine intimation, he began intently to consider whether those words were ever used in any childish game. Feeling sure that he had never heard them used by children in their play, he repressed his tears, and took the voice to mean that God bade him to open a book and read the first verse on which he lighted. He had heard from Pontitianus how Antony's life had been practically decided by these *sortes Biblicae*, when he had understood as a direct command to himself the words of the Gospel—"Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor." He rushed back to the place in which he had left Alypius sitting, for there he had laid down the manuscript of St. Paul. "I seized it, opened it, and read in silence the verse on which my eyes first fell—'*Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*'—(Rom. xiii. 13, 14.) I wished to read no more. There was no need. For instantly, as though the light of salvation had been poured into my heart with the close of this sentence, all the darkness of my doubts had fled away."[1]

Putting his finger in the place he closed the volume, and, with a countenance which had resumed its calm, he indicated to Alypius how things stood with him. Alypius then implied that he too had been changed. He asked to see what Augustine had

[1] The Latin Church only celebrates *two* conversions—those of St. Paul (Jan. 25), and St. Augustine (May 5).

read, and on being shown the passage he called his friend's attention to the words which followed—"*Him that is weak in the faith receive ye.*"

Those words confirmed him, for he applied them to himself, although, says Augustine, he had long been far my superior in moral character. They went to Monnica and told her what had occurred. She recognised that God, in answer to her prayers, had granted her even more than she had ever dared to hope. For,

> "Now the sweet arrow of the love divine,
> Remorselessly had pierced Augustine's heart;
> The flowers of speech he will no more entwine,
> Frequent no more the rhetorician's mart:
> He gazeth on the sun so long denied,
> And the sun-gazer groweth sunny-eyed."

XVII

Continued

AUGUSTINE AT CASSICIACUM

"Joie, pleurs de joie, renonciation totale et douce."—PASCAL.

SECTION V

AUGUSTINE now determined to abandon the profession of rhetoric, which he could hardly persuade himself to retain even for the twenty days which intervened before the vintage holiday naturally closed the term. He wished neither to make a sensation nor to offend the parents of his pupils, and he was able to offer the perfectly true excuse that some disease of the chest was severely trying him, and that at least a temporary rest was indispensable. But, in point of fact, he was a changed man, and could not bear any longer to be a "seller of words." The determination to be pure had triumphed in him, and he now saw that by God's grace this was possible. The desire for earthly gain and earthly glory was altogether dead.[1]

The purpose of Augustine to retire and devote his life wholly to God was only known to a few friends. Among these was Verecundus, a grammarian of Milan, but not yet a Christian, to whom he was deeply attached, and who was unable to join the new converts because he was married to a faithful wife, whom he loved, and with whom they advised him to stay. Nebridius, who mainly out of kindness assisted him in his school, intended soon to attach himself to their party. When Augustine wrote

[1] *C. Academ.* i. 3; *De Beat. Vit.* 4; *De Ordine*, i. 5. In these earlier books he naturally passes over the story which, at a later period, he felt bound to tell in his Confessions.

his *Confessions* both Nebridius and Verecundus were dead. Both had been baptized before their death, and Nebridius, who was then a Docetist, gave up his error, was baptized shortly after Augustine, and brought over his whole family to the Christian faith.

Verecundus rendered to Augustine and his friends the great service of lending them his country house, which bore the name of Cassiciacum, for which Augustine prays that God may reward him. It was a pleasant villa in the mountains, amid chestnuts and olives and vineyards and fields of harvest, not far from the Lago Maggiore, surrounded by a shady garden and green meadows, which were watered by a little stream.[1] Thither Augustine went, in the autumn of 386, with a very peaceful and joyous heart, accompanied by his mother Monnica, his brother Navigius, his pupils Trygetius and Licentius, his cousins Lastidianus and Rusticus, his friend Alypius, and Adeodatus, then a boy of fifteen, the son of his sin.[2] It was an interesting and varied company. Navigius, Lastidianus, and Rusticus, being men of no great knowledge or capacity, took very little part in the discussions in which Augustine and Alypius were the chief disputants, and which were meant to stimulate the two youths in the power of impromptu expression and philosophic reasoning. Trygetius was a young soldier who had left the army, and entered keenly into questions of deep and abstract interest. The young Licentius, " the laureate of the little band," a son of Romanianus, was abler than his companion, but was distracted by his passion for poetry, and, fired by their readings of Virgil, had begun a poem on Pyramus and Thisbe. His complimentary poem to his beloved teacher is still extant.

At Cassiciacum they lived in delightful peace, and we are glad to get so clear a glimpse of the daily life of that beautiful but humble society. Monnica undertook for them the management of the household. Augustine's time was fully occupied. He rose with the dawn. He studied the Psalms with inexpressible pleasure. He took his share in rustic toil, and superintended the

[1] Now possibly Cassago de Brianza. If so, the site is occupied by the palace of the Visconti of Modrone. But it is perhaps more probable, from the mention of the stream and the scenery, as well as for philological reasons, that it is the Lombard town of Casciago from which Monte Rosa is visible, and the line of the Alps to their junction with the Apennines, as well as part of Lago Maggiore. See Manzoni's letter to M. Poujoulet, quoted by the Bishop of Derry, l. c.

[2] *De Beat. Vit.* 6.

labourers. Much of the day was spent in this work, in writing letters, and in teaching his pupils. Half of the night was always devoted to meditations. The meals were few, brief, and extremely simple, but they were brightened by genial intercourse. They used all to combine in the discussion of some grave and important subject, and his two pupils made an advance so wonderful as to be almost incredible to those who had previously known them.[1] At these discussions a shorthand writer was always present, and they form the substance of the books *Against the Academicians*, *On the Order of Providence*, and *On a Happy Life*.[2] The writer reported the exact words of Augustine and Alypius, and the substance of the remarks of the others. Augustine disliked the physical labour of writing, and was not in sufficiently good health to undertake it.

The book *Against the Academicians* is of no great value. It simply reports the discussions of three days as to the attainability of truth. Augustine admits that it might have been compressed into much smaller space than three books if it had not been his object to train the powers of the young men. The discussion *On a Happy Life* also occupied three days, and is designed to prove that true happiness consists in knowing God. The two books *On Order* are a sort of Theodicaea. Another product of the seven months' stay at Cassiciacum is the *Soliloquia*, in which, in the ecstasy of holy contemplation, he discusses the loftiest problems with God and with his own soul.[3] These books have not yet attained the specifically Christian character of his later writings. He confesses that they breathe more of the cedars of the gymnasia, which God has broken, than the wholesome herbage of the Church, which is fatal to serpents.[4]

Alypius had expressly urged him not to introduce the name of Christ into these discussions, because he wished them to be purely philosophical in their character. And yet they rest on a Christian basis, and have a certain charm of their own. The sharers in the philosophic enquiry are no longer the splendid statesmen and orators whose words breathe and burn in the eloquent pages of Cicero, nor do they converse in the magnificent villas adorned with statues of heathen philosophers or heathen

[1] Licentius testifies to their enjoyment of these days in his *Carm. ad Praeceptorem Augustinum*, *Ep.* xxvi.

[2] *De Ordine*, i. 5.

[3] This work suggested to Malebranche the idea of a Dialogue with the Word, the Supreme reason, Villemain, *Tableau de l'eloquence chrétienne*, p. 403.

[4] *Conf.* ix. 5, sec. 7.

gods. They are humble provincial neophytes, talking with young Christian pupils, under the wintry sunshine in the rustic garden or humble bath-room of a country farm.

What can be more delightful in its simplicity than the narrative of the trivial incident which gave rise to the discussion *On Order?*

It was late autumn, and the nights were long. Since even wealthy Italians were unable to afford the luxury of lamps for all the hours of darkness, St. Augustine accustomed himself to lie awake in meditation for the first or last half of every night. He had tried to train his pupils also in this habit of thinking, that they might not spend too much time exclusively over books, but might also accustom their minds to dwell at home. Augustine, then, was lying awake, when his attention was attracted by the intermittent gushes of the little stream which fed the bath. He could not understand why its music as it ran over the pebbles was sometimes low and sometimes loud. While trying to imagine the reason, he found that Licentius also was lying awake, for he knocked on the floor with a stick beside his bed to frighten away some troublesome mice. "Licentius," said Augustine,—"for I see that your Muse has kindled a light for your lucubrations,—have you noticed how unevenly that water-channel is sounding?" "That," he answered, "is nothing at all new to me. For in my longing for fair weather, when I awoke and had listened intently lest a shower should be coming on, the water was gushing in the same way as now." "Yes," said Trygetius, "I noticed it too;"—and thus showed that he also, without their knowing it, was lying awake in his bed.

Augustine thought that the opportunity should not be thrown away, so he asked his pupils what they took to be the reason of the phenomenon, for at that hour no one could be either crossing the stream or washing anything in it. Licentius replied that it was caused by the dense fall of the autumn leaves, which alternately impeded, and were swept away by, the flow of the water.[1]

[1] "I seem to hear
The very leaf which autumn-tide brought low
In Lombardy a thousand years ago,
And as it dropped insubstantive on the rill,
And, sinking, helped to break the brimming flow,
Set moving high discourse of fate and will,
Proving that chance is God's incognito;
That Chance, in heaven's tongue Order, interweaves
Vaster variety than waves and leaves."

Augustine thought he was right, and praised him for his acuteness, confessing that he himself had been unable to conjecture the cause. A little afterwards he added, "You were right not to wonder, and to keep yourself at home with your Calliope." "Yes," said Licentius; "but you have now given me a great cause for wonder." "What is that?" asked Augustine. "Why," answered the youth, "that *you* wondered at such things." "Why should I not wonder?" asked Augustine; "the vice of wonder is caused by something unusual, beyond the obvious order of causes." "Beyond what is obvious, I admit," said Licentius; "but nothing seems to me to happen beyond the true order of things."

"Excellent," exclaimed Augustine, surprised at the readiness and acuteness of the remark; "you are getting far higher than the Helicon, to whose summit, as though to heaven, you are striving to attain. But pray support the opinion, for I shall try to shake it." "Please leave me alone," he replied; "I am thinking of other things."

Fearing from this that his poetic studies would alienate Licentius from the philosophy, which was more important, Augustine complained that he was vexed at the youth's incessant pursuit of verse, which was building a more cruel wall between him and the truth than his verses were trying to build between Pyramus and Thisbe;—for that wall had at least a chink in it.

Licentius made no answer, and Augustine returned to his own meditations, thinking it useless to disturb the mind of his pupil, which was so much preoccupied. But after a pause Licentius quoted a line of Terence—"By my own testimony I am as wretched as a mouse." "I think," he added, "that could be said of me; but the 'to-day I am undone,' which follows, shall not be true of me. I hope you won't disdain to take an omen from mice, as the superstitious are wont to do: if I by my knocking warned the mouse (who betrayed to you that I was awake) that he should be wise and go and be quiet in his hole, why should not I, by the sound of your voice, be warned to philosophise rather than to sing? For philosophy is, as you have begun to persuade me, our true and unshaken home. So then, if it does not trouble you, ask what you wish. I will do my best to defend the order of things, and will assert that nothing can occur beyond their order. And if you vanquish me in the disputation I shall not attribute it to anything accidental,

but to the order of things." Trygetius assented to the proposal, and after he had "chaffed" Licentius a little for abandoning his Academic "suspension of judgment" by such positive assertions, the discussion began.

Again, what could be more naïvely simple than the renewal of the talk after the day had dawned? Augustine indirectly reminds Licentius how Monnica had reproved him the previous night for singing the verse of a psalm—of which he had just learnt the tune—in a place and at a time which she considered unsuitable. Thus the dialogue springs up from the most trivial daily incidents. But the chief value of these discussions is that they uplift every question to the highest conclusion. "The philosophy conducts to religion, and the two are there united."

We may notice further points of interest in these early works.

One is the beautiful insight exhibited in the answers of Monnica, whose want of knowledge and philosophy was amply supplemented by her saintly experience. When they were discussing a happy life, she said, "*If a man wishes and possesses good things, he is happy; if he wishes for bad things, he is wretched even if he possesses them.*"[1] "If a man be possessed of every source of earthly felicity," she said, "he still could not be satisfied with them, and therefore would always be wretched because he would always be in want. No one, therefore, can be made happy by those things, but only by moderation of mind." She compared the ever-wavering Academics to persons who had the epilepsy, and said, "To be in want is to be wretched; and if a man is in want of wisdom he is a far greater pauper than if he is in want of money." She closed the discussion *On a Happy Life* by quoting the hymn of Ambrose, "Fove precantes, Trinitas," adding that "the happy life, the perfect life, was that to which we could be gradually led by firm faith, by cheerful hope, by burning charity." Monnica sat beside them, says Augustine, "in the dress indeed of a woman, but with the faith of a man, the calmness of old age, the love of a mother, and the holiness of a Christian."[2] It is perhaps surprising that he should express such rapturous admiration at the expression of truths which had long been the commonplaces of Plato and the Stoics, of Cicero and of Seneca; but what seemed so admirable was that the loftiest morality of the greatest heathen thinkers had become the ordinary heritage of the most uninstructed Christians.

[1] *De Beat. Vit.* i. 8, 10. [2] *Conf.* ix. 4, sec. 7.

"What had been a rare heroism had become an everyday belief," so that—

> "Each little voice in turn
> Some glorious truth proclaims,
> What sages would have died to learn
> Now taught by cottage dames."

What a new touch of Christian enthusiasm and tenderness is introduced into even the most jejune of these discussions when we read that the rhetorician, now a poor neophyte, prayed and shed tears when he thought of the coming discussion of the day, and of the ardour of his young pupils for the solution of such lofty problems! The sensibility of his genius is inspired by the sincerity of his love to God and of his desire to do his duty to men.

The gifted boy Adeodatus also distinguished himself in these philosophical discussions, and his very words are often reported. Augustine shuddered at the precocious promise of his son's intellect, lest it should portend an early death.[1] He had asked, "Who is in possession of God?" Licentius said, "He who lives well"; Trygetius, "He who does what God wills"; but the boy said, "He who has not an impure spirit," and Monnica and Navigius agreed with him. When his father asked him to define what he meant, he said, "He has not an impure spirit who lives chastely." "And whom do you call chaste; a man who commits no sins or a man who is free from impurity?" "How," answered Adeodatus, "can he be chaste, who, though pure, is yet enslaved by other sins? He lives chastely who attends wholly to the will of God, and holds himself firm to Him alone."[2] These definitions prefaced the discussion *On a Happy Life*, which was held on Augustine's birthday in the bath-room of the little villa.

Augustine also gives us an interesting story about his two pupils. The stimulating method which he adopted with them naturally awoke in them a spirit of emulation and even of occasional rivalry, and all the more from the very unusual circumstance that their arguments were taken down and published.

At one point the discussion *On Order* was broken rather painfully by a quarrel between the disputants. In the heat of

[1] Aug. *Conf.* ix. 6: "Horrori mihi erat illud ingenium."
[2] *De Beat. Vit.* 12, 18.

discussion Trygetius had been led to say that "when we say 'God,' we usually think of the Father, and that we think of Christ when we say 'the Son of God.'" "A fine thing truly," said Licentius; "shall we then deny that the Son of God is God?" Trygetius hesitated, but replied, "He is indeed God, yet properly we call the Father God." "Stop!" said Augustine; "for the Son is also properly called God." Trygetius felt a little horrified at his implied distinction, and as the shorthand writer was taking everything down as usual, he begged that his remark might not be reported. Licentius, however, as is the way with boys,—or rather, alas! with all human beings,—urged that the remark of Trygetius should be left undeleted—"as though the question were being discussed among us only for the sake of glory!" Augustine thereupon reproved him in terms so severe that he blushed, and then it was the turn of Trygetius to laugh and exult. Augustine was grieved to the heart. "Is this your conduct?" he exclaimed. "Does not the thought of the mass of vices and the darkness of ignorance, with which we are oppressed and covered, influence you? Is this that earnestness and desire for Divine truth in you at which a little while ago I foolishly rejoiced? Oh, if you could see, even with such purblind eyes as I do, in what perils we are lying, what madness of disease that laughter of yours implies! Unhappy boys! know you not where we are? . . . Do not, I entreat you, double my sorrows. If you owe me anything, if you willingly call me Master, give me my reward—Be good!"

He ended with a burst of tears, but Licentius, indignant that all this had been written down, said somewhat pertly, "Why, what have we done, pray?" "What!" exclaimed Augustine, "do you not even confess your fault? Do you not know how angry I used to be in my school when boys, out of vainglory, declaimed compositions which were not their own to gain applause? I thought that *you* had risen to higher feelings."

"You shall find how much better we will be in future," said the penitent boy, "but I entreat you by everything you love to pardon us, and order all that has passed to be blotted out of the notes." "Nay," said Trygetius; "let our punishment abide, that the very fame which allures us may terrify us from loving her by her own scourge, for we shall do our very utmost to prevent these pages from getting into the hands of any but our friends and intimates."

In that expectation the boys were mistaken, for, instead of being only known to their own little circle, their boyish faults, enshrined in the writings which have been preserved because of the splendour of their tutor's reputation, have become known to all subsequent ages.

But the incident is full of human interest, and strikingly illustrates the method of education which Augustine adopted, the warmth and depth of his feelings, and the lofty standard which he always kept before the eyes of those who had been entrusted to his care.

Augustine tells us two other incidents of these days. The one was how he cured himself of a habit which had become almost inveterate of taking oaths about everything.[1] The other was that, during a part of this happy time, he suffered from agonies of toothache—or more probably neuralgia—so severe that he was even unable to speak, and could scarcely even think. He thought that by more thoroughly contemplating the splendour of truth he could either dispel the pain, or at any rate, endure it more easily; but at last his torture was so great that he took a tablet and wrote on it an entreaty that all who were present would pray for him. They had scarcely knelt down when, not only to the astonishment but almost to the alarm of Augustine, the pain instantly ceased. He had never before had so remarkable an experience, and it increased the humble faith and hope with which he was contemplating his approaching baptism. For he had scarcely arrived at Cassiciacum before he wrote to Ambrose telling him something of his story, and offering himself as a candidate for baptism. He was now therefore a member of the class of *Competentes*, and Alypius and Adeodatus were to be baptized with him. He had also asked Ambrose which of the books of Scripture he had better read with special attention. Ambrose suggested the book of Isaiah. Augustine began it, but finding himself unable to understand the earlier chapters, he postponed the study to some time when he should be better able to grasp the meaning.

It will be seen, in the whole remaining course of Augustine's life, that, after his conversion, he was indeed a man whose heart had been changed by the grace of God. He was converted, and his one desire was thenceforth to strengthen his brethren. But

[1] Henceforth he only appealed to the witness of God on solemn occasions, which he justified by the example of St. Paul. (*Serm.* clxxx. 10.)

we must not fall into the error of supposing that he had no more spiritual battles to win, no results of past delinquency to conquer with the whole effort of his soul, and by constantly seeking for the grace of God. The wounds were healed, the scars remained. He felt for many a year the reactions and after-workings of the second and evil nature which habit had induced. He still sometimes felt "the infernal fire of lust" leaping up from its white embers in his heart. His nightly dreams were still disturbed with temptations which he had conquered in his waking hours. "Am I not," he cries, "am I not in dreams the man I am, O Lord my God? Does my reason slumber as well as the senses of my body? Cannot Thy mighty hand purify the weakness of my soul, and with richer grace exterminate the guiltiness of my dreams? Yea, Thou wilt more and more extend to me Thy gifts, that my soul may follow Thee, and even in my dreams may be beside Thee, full of purity, since Thou canst do more than we ask or understand." The tenth book of his *Confessions* shows us the hard and continuous struggle which he was still forced to maintain, and we hear him lament that evil still clung to him, not only in his dreams, but even in his religious exercises.

XVII

Continued

AUGUSTINE AFTER HIS BAPTISM

"When he came to himself."—Luke xv. 17.

"Fides quaerens intellectum."

SECTION VI

The happy days of Cassiciacum — perhaps the happiest in Augustine's life—drew rapidly to a close, and the little band of friends had to leave that quiet scene with all its enchanting serenity and verdure, to plunge once more into the troubled stream of active life. It is never possible for long to linger among the sheepfolds listening to the bleating of the sheep, or to gaze on the bright countenance of truth in the dewy air of delightful studies.

The chief time for baptism was Easter, and those who desired to join the preparation classes of *Competentes* gave in their names at the beginning of Lent. Both Augustine and Alypius returned to Milan, and were diligent and humble pupils of the catechists,[1] though both were probably superior to their teachers alike in learning, ability, and devoted faithfulness. In accordance with the ascetic tendencies of the day they both lived on a very small quantity of the plainest food, and Alypius used sometimes to walk barefooted even when the ground was hard with frost.

During these days Augustine wrote his book *On the Immortality of the Soul*, by way of supplement to his *Soliloquies*, and began his work on the elements of a liberal education, of which the books on music were afterwards finished. The earlier part

[1] *De Fid. et operr.* 9.

of this book is arid and unimportant, but he gradually leads up from aesthetics to religion.

On Easter Eve, 387—a day specially set apart for the baptism of adults—Augustine was baptized with Alypius and his young son Adeodatus, who was but fifteen years old, but whose gifts and graces were such as to fit him for receiving that solemn sacrament. The scene doubtless resembled that which he has described as occurring at the baptism of Victorinus, as the two young men and the boy entered the deep font on Holy Saturday, 387, were thrice plunged beneath the lustral wave, and went forth in their white chrisom robes. Augustine has not detailed the incidents of the day, but we know how deeply he was affected, even to tears, by the sweet sound of psalms and hymns sung by the congregation.[1] The circumstances which led to the introduction of antiphonal chants in the basilica of Milan have been already detailed in the Life of Ambrose.[2]

Henceforth the one object of Augustine was to give himself heart and soul to God. He and his friends now desired to live as monks. He does not indeed apply the name "*monachus*" to himself, but he applies it to Albina, Pinianus, and Melania, when they were living in Africa in a manner like his own.

Not long after his baptism he went with Monnica, his younger brother Navigius, Alypius, and Adeodatus to Ostia, determined to return to Africa, and there to find some suitable spot for founding a coenobitic community of ten persons, for whom two were, in turn, to be purveyors. They were joined by Evodius of Tagaste, a young officer who a little before had abandoned his profession and been baptized. At Ostia they refreshed themselves for their long journey, and made all their preparations to bid a final farewell to the country in which a stay of three years had altered the whole destiny of their lives.[3]

One evening Augustine and his mother were sitting at a win-

[1] *Conf.* ix. 6, sec. 14; 7, secs. 15, 16.

[2] See *supra*, 112, 113. Olympius, apparently another son of Romanianus, and Bishop of Tagaste after Alypius, was baptized with them.

[3] Ostia was then a busy and prosperous port, very unlike "the desolate Ruins by the Yellow Tiber on which the traveller now gazes, shortly after passing from the trees and violet-tufted hedgerows of the Campagna, over the vast marsh and by the salt-pits, looking to the sombre belt of pine by Castel Fugano." But the little party of Roman Africans found there some quiet resting-place where they were able to recruit their strength after the fatigues of their journey, and to prepare for the stormy passage from Italy to Carthage.

dow which looked over the little garden of their house.[1] They were alone, and Monnica, who then seemed to be in perfect health, little thought that in five or six days she would be dead. As they leaned on the window-sill under the unclouded starlight looking over the garden and the sea, the sweet and solemn stillness of the hour attuned their thoughts to holy things. They talked together of the Kingdom of God, and of the way in which men may get rid of earthly temptations and lusts by abandoning them and occupying the soul with sacred aspirations. The mother and son raised their whole hearts to heaven, until they seemed to have left all earthly thoughts behind, and enjoyed a foretaste of the hour when the faithful shall enter into the joy of their Lord. "My son," said Monnica, before they parted, "as far as I am concerned, nothing in this life delights me any longer. What I am to do here, or why I am here, I know not, since for me the hope of this world is spent. There was but one reason why I desired to linger in this life a little longer. It was that I might see you a Catholic Christian before I died. My God has granted me this in more abundant measure, so that I even see you His servant, despising all earthly felicity. What do I here?"[2]

Augustine, like Basil, enjoyed with an almost modern keenness the glories of nature, and the sea always affected him with peculiar delight and awe. In the *City of God*, he speaks of "the multiform and various loveliness of sky, and earth, and sea; the magnificent spectacle even of the sea alone, when it clothes itself with various colours as with robes, and is sometimes green, and that in many fashions, and sometimes purple, and sometimes azure." He even speaks of a deeper delight in watching its agitation.[3] Never could he have gazed over the twilight waves with higher and holier feelings than on this memorable evening.

About five days after this happy talk Monnica was seized

[1] *Conf.* ix. 10, 1: "Incumbentes ad quamdam fenestram."

[2] This scene is the subject of Ary Scheffer's beautiful picture (1845. See, however, Mrs. Jameson, *Sacr. and Legend. Art*, i. 314)—

> "Together, 'neath the Italian heaven,
> They sit, the mother and her son,
> He late from her by errors riven,
> Now both in Jesus one.
> The dear consenting hands are knit
> And either face, as there they sit,
> Is lifted as to something seen
> Beyond the blue serene."

[3] *De Civ. Dei*, xxii. 24.

with a fever, and fell into a long swoon. When she awoke she saw her two sons standing by her bed, and asked, "Where am I?" Gazing at them as they stood, dumb with grief, she said, "Will you bury your mother here?" Navigius, knowing that it had been her wish to be laid in the same grave as her husband Patricius, said, "It would have been a happier thing for you to die at home." She looked first at him and then at Augustine, and said, "See what he says!" Then she added, "My sons, bury this body where you will; do not trouble yourselves about it. I ask of you this only—remember me whenever you come to God's altar." A few days earlier, when Augustine was not present, she had been talking with his friends about the contempt of life and the blessing of death, and on being asked whether she would not dread to leave her body so far from her own country, she answered, "Nothing is afar from God; nor need I fear lest He, at the end of the world, should forget whence He should raise me from the dead." On the ninth day of her illness, in the fifty-sixth year of her age, that faithful and holy soul was set free from the mortal body. Augustine was then thirty-three.[1]

He closed her eyes in deep sadness, and his tears began to flow. He repressed them by a strong effort of his will, feeling that there was nothing there for tears. The boy Adeodatus began to wail aloud, but he was checked by those who were present, who thought it unfitting for men with Christian hopes that such a death should be celebrated by groans and lamentations, when they knew that to God's children death is the great birthright of the redeemed. Then Evodius took up a Psalter, and together they chanted the psalm, "I will sing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I sing."[2] Augustine was grieved all the more because he found it impossible to conquer his own natural grief, and put upon himself so violent a strain that he went and returned to the funeral without a tear. Not knowing how to crush his misery, he went to the bath, having been told that this would drive away his anguish; but he found it of no avail.[3] A night's sleep refreshed him, and when he

[1] Her bones were "translated" from Ostia to Rome in 1430, and the day set apart to *Sancta Monnica vidua* is April 4. There is an ancient epitaph to her written by Anicius Bassus (Consul, 408).

[2] Ps. ci. 1.

[3] He was told that "balneum" (bath) was derived from βαλανεῖον, "quod anxietatem pellat ex animo," *Conf.* ix. 11, sec. 32.

awoke in the morning he recalled the beautiful hymn of Ambrose—

"Deus creator omnium,
Polique rector, vestiens
Diem decoro lumine
Noctem sopora gratia;
Artus solutos ut quies
Reddat laboris usui,
Mentesque fessas allevet
Luctusque solvat anxios."

And then at last, as he thought of the beautiful life which he was no longer to witness, he gave himself to tears for her and for himself, which no eye witnessed but that of God. Strange that he should have felt it necessary to apologise, to regard it almost as a sin to be confessed, that he should have wept for the short space of an hour for the mother who had so often wept for him!

The death of Monnica disconcerted the plans of the friends, and they put off the journey to Africa. For about a year Augustine lived at Rome. Now that he had abandoned his professorial duties he had leisure to write. During this year he wrote his two books, *On the Morals of Manicheans* and *On the Morals of the Catholic Church.* His twofold object was to show that the boasted continence of the Manichees was unreal,[1] and that their criticisms of the Old Testament were founded on ignorance, whereas the Church presented a glorious example of virtue in the lives of her hermits, coenobites, and bishops.[2] He also wrote his book *On the Quantity of the Soul*,[3] and began that *On Free Will*, which was used by Pelagius as expressing his own views.[4] After the death of Monnica we lose the help of

[1] See *De Nat. Boni*, 4.

[2] In the glowing eulogy on "the Church" (*De Mor. Cath. Eccl.* i. 30) we see the germ of the views afterwards developed in the Donatist controversy, as well as those on the union of revelation with reason, authority with faith, on which he always insisted.

[3] In this book occurs the characteristic sentence "God is not only the Creator, but the native-land of the soul," with which Villemain (p. 409) compares the expression of Malebranche, "God is the place of spirits, as space is the place of bodies." With this again we may compare the name "Place" given to God by some of the Rabbis, and the remark that "God is not in Place but Place in God."

[4] As a specimen of the dialectical skill of Augustine we may quote this passage: "Will would neither be ours, nor will at all, if it was not in our power. If then it is in our power we are free to use it; whence it follows that, without

the *Confessions*, of which the tenth and following books cease to be autobiographic and are occupied with philosophical, spiritual, and exegetical reflexions.

disputing the entire foreknowledge of God, we will what we will. If He foreknows our will it must be will that He foreknows, for it is a will which He has foreseen, and could not be a will if it were not in our power. He therefore equally foresaw this power. His foreknowledge does not deprive me of the power which it has infallibly foreseen."

XVII

Continued

AUGUSTINE AS A MONK

"A thoughtful brow with saint engraved thereon,
And there was something of the Psalmist's grief,
And of the inspiration of St. John."—Bishop of Derry.

SECTION VII

After a year spent at Rome in profitable studies Augustine sailed to Carthage, where he was a guest in the house of Innocentius, a former agent of the Praetor of Africa. He was here an eye-witness of an event which he regarded as directly miraculous. Innocentius, a man who feared God with all his house, had been afflicted with fistulas, and had undergone the protracted agony of several operations. One of these was a deep fistula which remained after the others were healed. His own private physician had told him that this also would require an operation, but the other doctors, who had treated the domestic practitioner with contempt, and had not even allowed him to witness their operations, soothed Innocentius with hopes and promises, which were confirmed by an aged and distinguished leader of the profession named Ammonius, whom they had called into consultation. Innocentius, imagining himself secure, had laughed at his domestic doctor, but at last the physicians had been compelled to come round to his opinion, and to announce that, after all, another operation would be necessary. Innocentius in an access of anger and horror drove them from his presence, and refused to see them again. He was therefore compelled to send for an Alexandrian surgeon of the highest eminence, who, after seeing him, acted in the honourable way for which so many

members of that great profession are distinguished, and refused to reap the laurels of the cure which, now that only one more operation was necessary, really belonged to his professional brethren. They were recalled, and the Alexandrian promised to assist at the operation, which was postponed till the following day. After they had gone, a wail of distress filled the house, for Innocentius dreaded the anguish of the knife even more than the death which he felt convinced would result from it. Uzalensis, the Bishop of Tagaste, his future successor Aurelius, and with them a presbyter and a deacon, came in the evening to pay him their usual daily visit of consolation. He implored them to pray for him, and when they knelt on their knees he prostrated himself on his face with a violent movement, and began to pour forth his prayers to God with floods of tears, and with sobs and groans which shook his whole frame, and almost choked his words. Whether the others prayed Augustine cannot tell, but he was himself so much absorbed in what Innocentius was doing that he could not pray himself. He could only briefly exclaim in his heart, "*O Lord, what prayers of Thy people hearest Thou, if Thou hearest not these?*" for it seemed that nothing could be added to such entreaties unless Innocentius died while praying. They rose; the bishop gave his blessing; Innocentius entreated them to be present with him the next morning. The dreaded day dawned; they came; the physicians were present; the terrible surgical implements were produced before their horror-stricken eyes; the unhappy patient was bound down in the requisite position. The ligaments were untied; the place was laid bare; the chief physician examined it with his knife in his hand. They scrutinised it; handled it; tried it in every possible way. No fistula was there! It was entirely healed, and nothing remained but a solid scar! Augustine says that the joy which followed, the tears of congratulation, the thanksgivings to the God of power and mercy, must be imagined rather than described.[1]

Augustine left Carthage for Tagaste, and there he sold his paternal estate and gave the whole proceeds to the poor, reserving nothing for himself, that he might serve God with unimpeded soul.[2] We are told again and again of a similar step being

[1] *De Civ. Dei*, xxii. 8, sec. 3.

[2] *Ep.* cxxvi. 7: "Ego quippe secundum multorum sensum . . . non divitias dimisisse sed ad divitias videor venisse. Vix enim vigesima particula rei mea

taken by the devoted Christians of this period, and we would gladly have been informed wherein this "giving to the poor" consisted. So far as the money was spent in founding institutions for the support of virtuous indigence, or the cure of sickness, it was wisely spent; but there is reason to fear that the institutions of the day fostered an aimless and promiscuous almsgiving, which, while it seemed to obey the letter of Scripture, was in deadly opposition to its spirit. To give thus indiscriminately was to foster the curse of mendicant pauperism, and to inflict a grievous injury not only upon society in general, but most of all upon the recipients of a blind and unreasoning bounty. "Blessed is he that *considereth* the poor," and such consideration has long led every wise Christian to see that no almsgiving to the poor is true charity which does not elevate while it relieves—nay, that it is not charity but injury to give when the giving only helps to multiply the number of thriftless, idle, and vicious lives. The distributions of the third and fourth centuries, the monastic doles of the Middle Ages, were a fruitful source of demoralisation and misery. In what sense and in what way Augustine, and the friends whom he induced to follow his example, sold all they had and gave to the poor we do not know. In any case they had the full merit of their holy self-sacrifice. It would be absurd to blame them, because they had not anticipated the lessons which have been taught us by the experience of so many hundred years.

But though the views of Augustine on the subject of almsgiving may have been as little in accordance with the teaching of political economy as those of his own and many subsequent ages, we are glad to find that he did not share the extravagant misconceptions which prevailed among many of the early ascetics. When the Pelagians wished to exclude from the kingdom of heaven the rich who did not part with their goods, he explained to them that the call to do this was not uttered to all men. It was only "a counsel of perfection" to those who received and who needed it, nor was it given to the rich only. If he mentions that he himself has obeyed the command of Christ to the young ruler, he only does so to show that he is

paterna existimari potest in comparatione praediorum ecclesiae quae nunc ut Dominus existimor possidere." Just before he has said, "Si in me dilexerunt quod audierant, paucis agellulis paternis contemtis, ad Dei liberam servitutem me fuisse conversum."

not pleading his own cause; and he adds that he was not a rich man any more than the Apostles were.[1]

The little community occupied as tenants the patrimonial house and estate near the walls of Tagaste which Augustine might have occupied as an owner. Besides Alypius, Romanianus, and Evodius, Severus, afterwards Bishop of Mileum, and others joined him, both rich and poor. In this monastic retreat he spent three peaceful but busy years. They were much occupied in the study of Scripture, and it was in response to the constant enquiries of his companions that Augustine dictated the answers which afterwards made up the book of eighty-three questions. He also kept up an animated correspondence with Nebridius until his early death, and gave all the help he could to those who consulted him about their civil concerns. He wrote two books on Genesis against the Manicheans, in which he adopted the allegoric method of interpretation; twelve books on the literal interpretation, which he never completed; six books on music, about the value of which, except the sixth book, he seems himself to have had grave doubts, but which illustrate his way of mingling every topic with aspiration towards God;[2] two books on the Master, containing a discussion with Adeodatus, in which he tries to lead him to see that the one great teacher is God;[3] and his valuable treatise on true religion.

By these writings, and by his holy life, he became widely famous. Coenobitic communities were until that time almost wholly unknown in Africa, and it was only from his example that they became, in a short time, extremely numerous. He could not but be aware that if he entered any city where there was no bishop, he ran considerable risk of being seized by force, and consecrated to the episcopal office. He therefore sedulously avoided such places. But towards the end of his three years he was invited to Hippo Regius by a friend, who had been one of the Imperial Commissioners, who told him that he felt a strong inclination to sell all that he had and join him in his monastery if only he would come and teach him. Augustine came, but his friend postponed his determination from day to day. Hippo

[1] *Epp.* clvi. clvii. 39.

[2] *Retractt.* i. 12.

[3] He is still much occupied with Platonic thoughts, and in this book we find a Christian representation of the doctrine of Ἀνάμνησις (*reminiscence*) in the discussion of the origin of human knowledge. The Platonic belief in "ideas" becomes the presence of God in the human soul, and its conformity with the inner light of truth.

Regius—so called to distinguish it from another Hippo [1]—was a fortified city of great distinction, and the capital of the district of maritime Numidia in which it stood. The poet Statius calls it "Hippo, beloved by ancient kings." Nothing now remains of it except a few ruined cisterns near the modern town of Bona, and the mouth of the river Reybouse. One of its bishops, named Theogenes, had been a martyr in the days of Cyprian, and it could boast of twenty martyrs besides. The Christian basilica was one of the most conspicuous ornaments of the city.[2] But Augustine thought himself safe at Hippo, because it was under the presidency of an excellent bishop named Valerius, who stood at the head of a considerable number of chor-episcopi.

But Valerius was advancing in years, and, being a Greek, could not preach in Latin so fluently as he desired. He had long been praying that God would grant him the co-operation of some pious and competent presbyter to assist him in his labours, and he rejoiced at the opportunity which now offered itself of securing the support of the foremost among the African Christians. Augustine, suspecting nothing, went to service in the church, and stood among the common multitude. But they knew his history; and when Valerius began to preach about the necessity of ordaining a presbyter to assist him, they seized Augustine, and with loud shouts demanded that he should be ordained. Dreading the labours to which he would be exposed in a Church already rent with schism, he protested against their purpose with floods of tears, which they attributed to the fact that he was only to be ordained a presbyter and not a bishop! The multitude sometimes claimed the ordination of a man by whose wealth they could be assisted, or protected by his power; but Augustine was a simple layman, with no office, no gold or silver, who possessed nothing but the clothes in which he stood. They showed insight in their demand. Had it not been for the fame of Augustine, the name of Hippo would have been absolutely unknown.

Feeling himself unable to resist—regarding the voices of the people as a call of God—Augustine reluctantly submitted to ordination. But the event had been so sudden that he begged Valerius to give him leave of absence till the following Easter,

[1] Hippo Zarritus, near Utica (*De Civ. Dei*, xvi. 8).
[2] *Serm.* cclxxiii. 7; *De Civ. Dei*, xxii. 8, sec. 9.

that by prayer and meditation and study of the Scriptures he might prepare himself for his sacred duties. The letter in which he pleaded with Valerius for this remission is a beautiful proof both of his humility and of his sense of the grandeur of the office to which he was henceforth to devote his life.[1]

So ended the quiet time at Tagaste, which had only been embittered by the loss of his friend Nebridius, and of his young and deeply beloved Adeodatus, who was cut off in the blossom of his age before he had had time to fulfil the brilliant promise of his intellect. Augustine speaks but little of this bereavement, for Adeodatus was the son of his shame, and he confesses that he has no share in that bright young soul except his sin. But there are many signs that the death of this fine boy caused him the deepest sorrow.[2]

He returned to Hippo at the Easter of 391, in the fortieth year of his age. Valerius received him with warm affection, and as he felt no jealousy towards his presbyter, the two lived and worked together in beautiful concord. Augustine, writing to the Donatist Bishop of Hippo in the absence of Valerius, is able to assure him that Valerius will approve of any step taken by himself. He always spoke of him with reverence and affection, and tells an anecdote of the old man's naïve delight when, on hearing the word *salus* constantly used by two Punic rustics, he asked them what the word meant, and was told that it meant "*Three*";[3] so that the Latin word for salvation was the Punic word for the "Trinity." Valerius felt such confidence in Augustine that he even appointed him to preach in his place and in his presence. This was contrary to the custom of the African Church, where, according to a rule which Jerome condemns as due to jealousy, bishops did not allow their presbyters to preach.[4] Valerius was blamed for his innovation, but such was the fame of Augustine's sermons that the custom soon spread into the other Churches of Africa.[5]

[1] *Ep.* xxi.

[2] The Bishop of Derry thus alludes to him—

> "With her (Monnica) a boy of fifteen summers came.
> Into the presence of the lad did pass
> An influence from a climate, as of flame;
> And in those lustrous eyes of his there was
> A tint of flowers, and oceans far away,
> Amid the woods and waves of Africa.
> All they who early pass through the dark gate
> Have looks like thine, thou young Adeodate."

[3] *Expos. ad Rom.* sec. 13. [4] Jer. *Ep.* ii. [5] Aug. *Ep.* xli.

Knowing the yearning of Augustine for the monastic life, Valerius gave him a garden contiguous to the church, where he erected a building suitable to his purpose. The rule of the house was that the brethren who lived in it should, like Augustine himself, sell all that they had, whether it was much or little, and give to the poor. No distinction was made among them in favour of previous rank or wealth, but they aimed at reproducing the life of the little primitive Church in Jerusalem, by having all things in common. They were to call nothing their own. The monastery at Hippo became a training-school for the clergy, and furnished no less than ten bishops to the Church of Africa. Among the more illustrious of these were Alypius of Tagaste, Profuturus of Cirta, the Metropolitan of Numidia, Severus of Mileum, and Possidius of Calama. The latter enjoyed the friendship of Augustine for forty years, and was peculiarly fitted to become his biographer, for during that long period no shadow of dissension ever arose between them.

The pupils of Augustine disseminated far and wide in their dioceses and parishes his monastic institutions. They were not looked upon by all as an unmixed benefit, and Augustine himself found by bitter experience that the monk's dress may easily conceal the heart of the hypocrite and the libertine. He confesses that even in his own house there were good monks and there were bad monks. He could not hope, he said, to make it purer than Noah's ark; or than the little band of Apostles, of whom one was a Judas; or than heaven, from which the angels fell. Some of the best men whom he had ever known had been trained in monasteries, but also some of the worst.[1] He makes this confession on the occasion of a frightful scandal which arose in his community from the charges made against each other by a priest named Bonifacius and a layman named Spes. It was impossible to discover which of the two was really guilty, and after much anguish of mind Augustine saw no better way to decide the question than to send them both to the grave of St. Felix at Nola in order that there the innocence or the guilt of each might be decided by some miraculous intervention. On another occasion a monk pleaded fatalism as an excuse both for

[1] "Fateor . . . quomodo difficile sum expertus meliores quam qui in monasteriis profecerunt, ita non sum expertus pejores quam qui in monasteriis ceciderunt," *Ep.* lxxviii. secs. 8, 9; *Enarr. in Ps. cxxxii.* secs. 3, 4.

disobedience and for immorality.[1] Donatus and his brother left the monastery in order to push their ambitious views elsewhere.[2] Paulus, Bishop of Cataqua, disgraced the Church of Hippo by his misconduct, and Augustine had to renounce his communion.[3] Antonius had been trained in the house from his earliest boyhood, and at last Augustine recommended him for the bishopric of Fussala; but he so completely disgraced his office that Augustine half determined to resign the see of Hippo to testify his penitence for having supported the claims of such a man.[4] Another monk whom he had known from childhood fell grievously away in spite of every effort which he could make to save him.[5] Augustine pleads that it was impossible to know the real character of men until they had been actually admitted into the house, so that no human power could prevent the falling away of some. Others, who entered in the hope of finding a harbour of refuge, felt so bitterly disappointed when they discovered that there were bad brethren in the monastery as well as bad men in the world, that they abandoned their vows in disgust, and became if not the calumniators, yet the uncharitable critics, of institutions which had failed to satisfy an unreasonable ideal. The mixture of classes among the brethren, the free admission of husbandmen, artisans, slaves, and paupers, rendered it more difficult to secure perfect sanctity, or even the absence of grave abuses.[6] Among so many it was inevitable that some should be brought thither by the dubious motives which also crowded the monasteries with so many worthless characters during the Middle Ages.

> "'Tis not for nothing the good bellyful,
> The warm serge, and the cord that goes all round,
> And daylong blessed idleness besides."

It was for this reason that Augustine so strenuously insisted on the necessity for manual labour. "Servants of God," he wrote to Bishop Aurelius and his monks, "soldiers of Christ, know you not the plots of the treacherous foe who has scattered everywhere so many hypocrites under the guise of monks, who traverse the provinces without mission, without home, never fixing their abode anywhere? Some of them carry the relics of

[1] *De dono persev.* 38. [2] *Ep.* lx. [3] *Ep.* lxxxv.
[4] *Ep.* ccix. secs. 3-10. [5] *De Gen. ad litt.* xii. 37, 38.
[6] *Enarr. in Ps. xcix.* 10, 11.

martyrs, or what they pretend to be such, and know how to make use of them; others boast of their amulets and prophylactics; others, not shirking from the guilt of lies, declare that they have relations and kinsmen in such and such a country, and are on their way to visit them. All of them insist and demand that money should be given them, either to meet the wants of their lucrative poverty or to reward their pretended virtue." Thus the pretence of saintly mendicity became the reality of greedy imposture. Monasticism thus early filled the land with sturdy adventurers, and—as Bonaventura says of the Minorites—men shunned a begging friar who was seen on a road at a distance as if he were a pestilence.

Augustine seems also to have been the founder of the first nunnery in Africa. There had always been virgins who had consecrated their life to God, but they do not seem to have been collected into one community in these dioceses until he gathered a number of them together at Hippo under the rule of his sister, a pious widow who numbered the daughters of Navigius among her nuns. Augustine could rarely be induced to see them, and never alone, or unless the need for his presence was urgent. He once had to write a severe letter to a body of nuns who were clamouring for the deposition of an abbess whom they disliked; and he seized the opportunity to sketch out for them a prescribed rule.[1]

Even during the five years of his presbyterate Augustine rendered great services to the Church, in which he was assisted by Aurelius, the able Bishop of Carthage. From the first he was engaged in those struggles against heretics and schismatics, of which we shall speak farther on. In 393 he was invited by the bishops assembled at a council of the African Church to preach before them "On Faith and the Creed," and afterwards to publish his address. So great was his reputation that Valerius was in constant dread of his being seized and nominated for some bishopric, and on one occasion he was only able to avert the danger by hiding him in a seclusion where no one could find him. He began his correspondence with Jerome, of which I have fully spoken elsewhere, and with Paulinus of Nola, for whom he had the highest admiration and esteem. By exerting the whole force of his will and eloquence he put an end to one of the very worst customs of the Church. Chiefly through his

[1] *Ep.* ccxi. 4.

appeal to Aurelius a canon had been passed by the Council of Hippo, which forbade bishops and presbyters to banquet in the churches, but it was not so easy to restrain the license of the people. There was a festival of some saint annually observed at Hippo, which was known to the people by the name *Laetitia*, "joy," and on this day Catholics and Donatists alike abandoned themselves to the wildest excesses of gluttony and drunkenness. Augustine was told that the people would not tolerate the prohibition of their annual revel, and took the occasion afforded him by the Gospel for the Sunday to denounce the custom in a sermon on "Give not that which is holy to the dogs." The sermon was widely discussed and severely criticised, and he returned to the same topic in a powerful Lenten discourse on driving out those that bought and sold in the Temple. He entreated the congregation with tears not to drive him to extremes, and when he had moved them also to tears he hoped that he had carried his point. But when the morning of the festival dawned he was told that some of his people were still determined to hold their *Laetitia*, and since he knew not what more he could do he determined to enter the church to preach to them on Ezek. xxxiii. 9.—"Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." If they still persisted, he determined to shake out his garment against them, and depart. Happily, before noon, the people came to a better mind; and abandoning his prepared discourse Augustine preached an extempore sermon, in which he told them that their bad custom had only arisen from a concession made in earlier days to idolaters who missed their heathen feasts. He entreated them henceforth to rise to higher things, and to imitate the other Churches in which there had never been this bad custom, or in which it had been voluntarily abandoned. He carried the people with him. The hours which would have been degraded by sensual excesses were spent in psalmody and worship.[1]

Another bad custom which the eloquence of Augustine abolished was the *Caterva*—"a small but serious and bloody encounter which took place yearly at Caesarea in Mauretania, in which the inhabitants of the city were divided into two armed bands, fathers against sons, or brothers against brothers, and fought to the death for five or six days, until the town flowed

[1] *Ep.* xxix.

with blood. No imperial edict had availed to uproot the hateful custom. . . . Augustine harangued the people against it, and was deafened with their applause, but continued to speak to them till their tears flowed." From that time the custom disappeared.[1]

Among the books which he wrote during this period were those *On the Usefulness of Believing; On Two Souls; On Lying*, which was partly aimed at Jerome's view about the dispute at Antioch; and Comments on the Sermon on the Mount, and the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians. He also wrote many of his letters.

[1] *De Doctr. Christ.* iv. 24.

XVII

Continued

AUGUSTINE AS BISHOP

"Ad perennis vitae fontem
Mens sitivit arida."—S. Petr. Damian.

SECTION VIII

In the forty-fifth year of his age Augustine was consecrated coadjutor-Bishop of Hippo. Valerius, who was now feeling the burden of age, had long desired to secure him as his successor, and thought that the surest method would be to have him appointed his coadjutor. Awaiting the opportunity of a visitation of Megalius, the Metropolitan of Numidia, he secretly invited Aurelius of Carthage to be present at the same time, and then in a sermon before the assembled bishops and clergy he published the design which had hitherto been kept a profound secret. It was welcomed by the people with a shout of joy.

But there were two difficulties to be removed. Augustine himself had never heard of coadjutor-bishops, and he would not consent to be consecrated until it had been proved to him that there had been many instances of such elections both in Africa and in other Churches.[1] Neither he nor Valerius knew that the appointment of coadjutors, except in very special circumstances, was forbidden by the eighth canon of the Council of Nice.[2] Afterwards, when he was made aware of this canon, he would never allow it to be broken, and to prevent such mistakes hereafter he procured the passing of an order that henceforth the

[1] *Epp.* xxxi. 4, ccxiii. 4.
[2] *C. Petil.* iii. 16, sec. 19; *Brevic. Coll.* iii. 7, sec. 9.

decrees of the canons should always be read to priests and bishops before they were ordained.[1]

The other difficulty was more formidable and more painful. The primate, Megalius, had a strong prejudice against Augustine, and refused to consecrate him, making against him some serious accusation, of which the nature is not mentioned. Augustine treated the charge with absolute disdain, and when Megalius in a council of bishops was ordered to produce his proofs he completely broke down, gave to Augustine his written exoneration from the calumny, and begged the pardon of the council for the fault which he had committed. He consecrated Augustine, who freely forgave him; but there seems to have been some continuous unpleasantness in the relations between them, for when Megalius died shortly afterwards, Augustine wrote to his friend Profuturus, Bishop of Cirta, in somewhat mysterious terms, "Scandals are not lacking, but there is also a refuge; sorrows are not lacking, but there are also consolations."[2]

Now that Augustine was a bishop he felt himself bound by the duty of hospitality, and could no longer be a monk; but he lived in a clergy-house surrounded by his presbyters and deacons, and made no change in the simplicity of his habits. He would ordain no presbyter at Hippo who would not conform to his rule, and he degraded those who abandoned it. He had conquered the temptations of his youth, and could say to God with all his heart, "Thou biddest me to be continent; give me what thou biddest, and bid what thou wilt."[3] He watched with almost morbid scrupulosity against any excess in eating or fondness for particular kinds of food. He drank wine, and though he was never drunken he was never quite satisfied that he did not take more than was absolutely required. He watched with great jealousy over the least delight either in sweet odours or sweet sounds, and so morbid was his scrupulosity that he was almost inclined to condemn any fondness for Church music as a sin, unless his pleasure in it was derived exclusively from the words and not from the melody. He not only guarded himself from every form of sinful passion, but scrutinised the working of all his senses, and if he sometimes felt curiosity in watching a dog chasing a hare, or lizards or spiders catching flies, he reproved

[1] Before he died he nominated the presbyter Heraclius as his successor, but because of the Nicene canon he would not make him a coadjutor. Possid. *Vit.* 8, *Ep.* ccxiii. [2] *Ep.* xxxviii. 2. [3] *Conf.* x. 29, sec. 40.

himself if he did not immediately connect the incident with some religious meditation. The one temptation which he now felt it most difficult to overcome was the love of human praise.

In his dress he avoided alike the affectation of poverty and the ostentation of display. His under garments were of linen, his outer garments of wool, and over all he sometimes wore a sort of coat worn also by laymen, and called *byrrhus*. If any one gave him a garment it was regarded as common property; if it was splendid he sold it and gave the proceeds to the poor, regarding it as unbecoming to a bishop of humble origin to wear rich attire. He never wore a ring on his fingers.[1] He could not fulfil what he strangely regarded as the Gospel rule of wearing no shoes. His health was too weak for this; he was intensely sensitive to cold, and he regarded the rule as not obligatory, because he found from the Gospel that Christ himself wore shoes.[2]

The ordinary food of his table consisted of vegetables, though meat was furnished to guests or to the weak. None of his clergy might drink more than a certain number of cups of wine, one of which was forfeited if they fell into the bad habit of swearing. The spoons were of silver, the rest of the table furniture was of earthenware, wood, or marble. He kept open house for guests known and unknown, and it was one most admirable rule of his hospitality that all calumny, slander, gossip, and spite were absolutely forbidden. On the table was an inscription—

> "Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere vitam
> Hanc mensam indignam noverit esse sibi."

Nor did the inscription express a mere idle sentiment. On one occasion some of his fellow-bishops showed themselves unmindful of it, and Augustine severely reproved them, saying that either the verses must be obliterated from his table, or that at any rate he would leave them in the middle of his meal and retire to his chamber.

He was unable to find time for the manual labour which was wisely required in most monastic bodies. The care of the Church, with the studies and labours which it involved, made incessant demands upon him, and he found little leisure even to read. He

[1] Possid. *Vit. Aug.* 22, *Serm.* ccclvi. (al. L.), *De div. u.* 13.
[2] *Ep.* cxxiv. and Possid. l. c. 24.

grew old before his time in consequence of ill health, which made it sometimes necessary for him to retire into the country for brief periods of rest and refreshment.[1]

The expenses of his clergy-house were paid out of the revenues of the Church, of which the remainder was given to the poor. He made it an absolute rule that his clergy were to be a communistic body living in the bishop's house, and none of them calling anything his own. If any one reserved anything for himself, he did so secretly and in violation of a distinct understanding. He would not accept a presbyter on any other terms. If one of his clergy did reserve property, he was not allowed to assign it to any one by will, and his name was struck off the list of Augustine's clergy. "Let him invoke a thousand councils against me," he said, "let him sail were he likes to denounce me, let him lie anywhere he can, God will help me that he shall not be a cleric where I am a bishop."[2] In all this he went beyond his mark, and set up an arbitrary tyranny not in accordance with Scripture precedents; nor did the plan work well, in spite of his perfect sincerity.

He set a noble example in the matter of legacies, which he refused to accept when he thought that they were unfair to the family of the testator. He admired Aurelius because, having received a legacy from a man of wealth who had no children, he at once restored it when a child was unexpectedly born to him.[3] He refused the heirdom of an estate from a father, who, in a fit of anger, had disinherited his son. He refused a legacy from Bonifacius because it involved the charge of shipping and the peril of sailors. Once, after he had received a deed of gift for a large property, the giver changed his mind, asked that the legal documents be restored to him, and offered a hundred pounds to the poor instead. Augustine at once abandoned his legal rights, restored the deeds, and contemptuously refused to receive the money from such a donor. He advised Alypius to behave in the same way in the matter of a disputed possession at Thiava, since it was always his principle to avoid giving needless offence. There were many who murmured at his magnanimity, because they desired to see their Church enriched, but it was infinitely better to be scrupulous in such matters than to show the rapacity for which the clergy of that day were so notorious

[1] On his incessant occupations, see *Serm.* cccii. (al. III.) *De div. u.* 17.
[2] *Serm.* ccclvi. 14. [3] *Serm.* ccclv. 5.

that laws of mortmain had to be passed against them. He resisted the passion for building because he thought that it involved worldly anxieties, but he encouraged his presbyter Leporius to build a hospice with money contributed for the purpose. He had a poor-box in his church and depended on the voluntary offerings of his people to supply him with money sufficient to meet the needs of the poor. He constantly impressed on them the duty of charity and almsgiving, which he sometimes exercised to save debtors from imprisonment. When other means were lacking he did not hesitate to follow the noble example of Ambrose in melting the Church plate to find funds for relieving paupers or prisoners.[1] Like other great bishops of that day he often flung the mantle of the Church over the miserable and oppressed, though his appeals to the civil authority on their behalf were always modest and respectful. The best bishops of the Church were also the ablest, wisest, and most disinterested of the defenders of the people.

As a preacher he took great pains with his sermons. They are never grand orations or elaborate theological treatises or pieces of ornate rhetoric, like those of the great Cappadocian Fathers. They were meant for the rude fishermen of Hippo, not for the polished reasoners of Antioch or Constantinople. They were short, plain, evangelical, and influenced by circumstances. He regarded it as the utmost triumph of Christian oratory to promote edification, and he thought that this could best be obtained by directness and simplicity, not by exhaustive treatment and artistic elaboration. He thought carefully over his topic whenever he could, but he usually trusted for his language to the inspiration of the moment. He was much discontented with his own sermons, and yet he was unanimously regarded as the first preacher in the Church of Africa. One secret of his success was that he tried to make himself intelligible to all. His desire was to touch the heart. There is little that is new and original in his discourses, for he aimed at the popularisation of the truths which he taught more scientifically in his formal writings. Even when he preached on such lofty doctrines as the Trinity, he did not dwell upon nice theological distinctions, but treated them as subjects for moral improvement. He gives

[1] See Ambros. *De off. cler.* ii. 28 ; Possid. *Vit. Aug.* 24. Victor Vitensis (*Hist. Persec. Vand.* i. 8) tells us that Bishop Deogratias of Carthage did the same during the cruelties of Genseric. Some "carnal bigots" objected to it.

us his sensibility without his scholasticism. Whether he was dealing with moral ideals or ecclesiastical dogmas, it was his constant desire to promote the life in God. He felt that the practical instruction which may be derived from sermons constituted one grand and beautiful distinction between Paganism and Christianity. Pagan priests sacrificed, but were silent. How could they preach a morality which was so flagrantly at discord with the legends of their own deities? For social amelioration their functions were useless, whereas the Christian bishop or presbyter was the teacher and ennobler of the people, their tribune in peril, their supporter in distress. His sermons were the constant delight of the faithful whom he addressed.[1]

He yielded to what he believed to be Divine guidance in breaking off into digressions suggested to him by the moment. On one occasion he asked Possidius and other friends whether they had noticed that he had started a question in his sermon without bringing it to any solution, and had digressed into an argument against the errors of the Manichees. They replied that they had observed the fact and been astonished by a method which was unusual with him; and he said that he had yielded to a secret impulse. A day or two after there came into the monastery a man named Firmus, who flung himself at Augustine's feet and begged with tears that he would pray for him. He had been, he said, a Manichee, and had given a great deal of money to their "elect," but had been led to see his error by a sermon of Augustine's. On enquiry they found that the sermon which had effected his conversion was the very digression to which Augustine had alluded. Shortly afterwards Firmus became a presbyter of the Catholic Church.

In old age his sermons became shorter, less rhetorical, and more dialectic. He sometimes omitted a sermon that the people might meditate on what he had last said. He was anxious not to weary them, and all the more because it was the custom in the African Church for the preacher to sit and for all the congregation to remain standing. He felt encouraged by the loud applause of his auditors, but still more when he saw them weeping. He preached in Latin, and it is a curious fact that he found a difficulty in procuring for his diocese a sufficient number of presbyters who knew Latin, and not only Punic. He dealt very

[1] Possid. *Vit.* 7: "Ineffabiliter admirantibus Christianis et collaetantibus.

plainly with the heresy, drunkenness, and swearing which were the commonest faults among Christians in that day.

His private ministrations were incessant, and all kinds of cases were constantly brought under his cognisance with which he dealt in letters or interviews. One may suffice by way of specimen, as it throws a curious light on the customs of the times. There was a Christian lady named Ecdicia, married to a Christian husband, and the mother of one son. She seems to have been an impulsive person, and in defiance of the injunction of St. Paul, she suddenly announced, without the consent of her husband, that she intended, though married, to keep a vow of absolute continence. Her husband, instead of being angry, bound himself by the same vow, and the two lived together in holiness and chastity for many years. Having thus taken her own course in one matter, she determined to take it also in others. Though ordered by her husband to wear the ordinary dress of a married woman, she chose instead to assume the black garb of a widow or a nun. Not content with even this, she disregarded the interests of her young son, and seized the opportunity of her husband's absence to give away nearly all his property to two foreign monks who had received her hospitality, and of whom nobody knew anything. It was shrewdly suspected that the two strangers were not monks at all, but only impostors in monks' garb; and even Augustine assumes that they must have been very dubious characters to accept so much money from an unknown married woman in the absence of her husband. Maddened by this extravagant folly, the husband broke his vow of continence and plunged into a dissolute career. Under these circumstances Ecdicia wrote to entreat the advice of Augustine. He reproved her severely but justly for her senseless wilfulness, and advised her to win her husband back by humility and prayer, and—if she succeeded—to promise that she would obey him in all things.[1]

Augustine had learned from Ambrose his exalted conception of the episcopal office and authority, though from the gentler tendency of his character he did not exercise it with so lordly an autocracy. We must, however, remember that in these days the power of a bishop, wielded by a man who was brave and spiritually-minded, was in most instances purely beneficent. It was the necessary counterpoise to a despotic imperialism wielded

[1] *Ep.* cclxii.

by officers who were often unscrupulous and practically irresponsible. The dangerous and illegitimate character of the rights which bishops began more and more to usurp is not seen in the lives of men like Basil, Ambrose, and Augustine, but in the arbitrary and intriguing violence of persons like George, Theophilus, and Cyril of Alexandria. The magnificent pictures of mediaeval art must not lead us to imagine these prelates moving about in golden copes and mitred stateliness. The mitre was not used till the eighth century. In the fourth the ordinary dress of the Christian minister was in no may distinguishable from that of laymen, whether Pagans or Christians, except by its humility and poverty. We read of splendid vestments which, at this period, began to be bestowed on churches, but Augustine, at any rate, thought it unbecoming to wear them. He desired to be regarded as poor and a teacher of the poor.

XVII

Continued

AUGUSTINE'S CONTROVERSIES WITH MANICHEANS

"Jamais âme n'a supporté avec plus d'impatience-les anxiétés du doute."—NOURRISON, i. 53.

SECTION IX

IT would prove intolerably wearisome were I to follow Augustine into the labyrinthine theological intricacies of his many controversies in which he discussed and defined almost every outline of the faith. Unhappily for himself, his energies were largely absorbed by polemical discussions; and unhappily for the Western Church, his often wavering and subjective decisions were accepted for centuries as the very oracles of orthodoxy. After his consecration as bishop, and when on the death of Valerius in 396 he became sole Bishop of Hippo, there is little that is interesting in the development of his character. His biography, diversified by few outward interests, dwindles into a record of his struggles against various heretics. These debates were forced upon him by the events of his day, and by what he regarded as his episcopal duty. By temperament he was peaceful and contemplative, but in the course of year-long discussions he became a hard dogmatist, and his final victory was sometimes won at the cost of love and tolerance. His personality becomes less attractive as his episcopacy becomes more triumphant, until at last the man who sighed so ardently for Christian charity, and was so much opposed to sacerdotal tyranny, uses expressions and arguments which become the boasted watchwords of the most ruthless inquisitors, and are quoted to sanction deeds so unchristian and so

infamous as the brutalities of Alva and the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

It might have been expected that the still numerous Pagans of Africa would have demanded his most strenuous missionary exertions; but his controversies with them were of a far more conciliatory character than those with Christians who differed from the Church on points of doctrine or organisation. The Paganism of the multitude was often the indignant protest of a nationality which had been crushed by Roman conquests, and barbarous rites still lingered among the Punic population. On the other hand, the Paganism of the cultivated classes was as elevated and philosophical as that of Julian himself. Madaura, near his native Tagaste, and the scene of his school-days, was devoted to Paganism, and his friend, the grammarian Maximus, wrote him a remarkable letter from that place, asking him to say who was the God of the Christians, and, setting aside his customary dialectics by which anything could be proved, to give plain reasons why men were to give up the ancient gods for obscure martyrs with uncouth names—Jupiter for *Mygdon*, Minerva for *Saules*, and all the Di immortales for the arch-martyr *Namphanion* or *Lucitas*. All this reminds Maximus of the battle of Actium, in which the monstrous divinities of Egypt vainly opposed the gods of Rome. The letter is interesting as one more proof how greatly the progress of true Christianity was hindered in the minds of cultivated Pagans—men like Julian, Eunapius, Libanius, Symmachus, and others—by the gross abuses of relic-worship and martyr-worship. Julian habitually called the Christians worshippers of the dead and of dead men's bones. Augustine, of course, answered that the worship was addressed to God, not to the martyrs; but that was a feeble defence of a folly which was opposed to the genius of true Christianity. In all other respects he easily answered the letter of the courteous Pagan. Why should he ridicule the name Namphanion? Is he so little of an African as not to know that it means in Punic "a messenger of good news"? Were there no base and ridiculous deities in Greek and Roman mythology? If Maximus has nothing better than this to offer, Augustine has no time for jests. The Pagans were not converted, but they liked and respected Augustine; and when the people of Madaura wrote a letter of introduction to him they addressed it "To our father Augustine, eternal safety in the Lord." It was only a form, but in his reply

Augustine calls them his "friends and kinsmen." The Pagan priest Longinian tried also to set before him the mythic and philosophic view of heathendom as consistent with the purest and loftiest morality, and Augustine's reply is full of particulars. When the people of Suffecta had massacred sixty Christians in revenge for the overthrow of a statue of Hercules, Augustine wrote them a very stern letter;[1] but when the people of Calama, at a heathen festival, attacked the church, killed several Christians, and endangered the Bishop Possidius, both Augustine and Possidius were more than content with the punishment of the actual murderers, and did their best to protect the city from the severity of the imperial vengeance.[2] When an African named Publicola wrote to ask Augustine how to act in certain cases of conscience—whether a Christian might enter Pagan ruins, or drink of a stream of which the water was used in sacrifice, or accept goods guaranteed by a heathen oath—Augustine answers him with a calm good sense learnt from the Epistles of St. Paul. The Christians of that day were of a generation enfeebled by long despotism and torn by sects and schisms, but in Augustine they had a champion of the most splendid endowments.

But his chief arguments were directed against dissentient Christians. Besides a number of minor struggles against Tertullianists, Priscillianists, Abelonians, Marcionists, Origenists, Arians, and others, he was entangled for years in multitudinous debates with the Manichees, the Donatists, and the Pelagians. The three controversies were widely different in character. The Manichean controversy touched on the very foundations of religious and philosophical belief; the Donatist controversy dealt with issues which were purely ecclesiastical; the Pelagian controversy turned on questions of abstract dogma and speculative theology. Each discussion left its influence on his own character. Strong as was his opposition to the Manichees, his long participation in their heresy had left deep though unconscious traces on his opinions, and reconciled him to those gloomy conceptions of the future destiny of the majority of mankind which would otherwise have been surely abhorrent to a mind naturally Christian. The struggle with the Donatists launched him into narrow, untenable, and pernicious views of the Church,

[1] *Ep.* l. He offers them a new Hercules, painted red!
[2] *Epp.* ciii. civ.

of catholicity, of the relations between civil and spiritual authority, and of the right to control men's consciences by the force of the secular arm—views which were frightfully prolific of curses in later ages. The Pelagian controversy, turning as it did on moral abstractions, led him to dogmatise on metaphysical and insoluble questions of

> "Reason and foreknowledge, will and fate,
> Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,"

in which men, like Milton's evil spirits, "find no end, in wandering mazes lost." He learnt to identify his own views on these subjects with the infallible verities of the Christian faith; and he furnished the excuse for such fruitless discussions as those between the Jesuits and the Jansenists, and the basis for such dogmas as those of Calvin with his "horrible decree."

Into this complication of strifes we shall not follow him, but shall compress into the briefest possible space the narrative of their incidents.

The first and most continuous of his controversies was with the followers of Manes, whose errors he felt it his special duty to oppose, because for nine years he had been their adherent, and had misled many others into their communion.

Mani, Manes, or Manichaeus, was a Persian who lived towards the close of the third century, but whose biography has become more or less legendary.[1] The odd story of Socrates is that a Saracen named "Scythian" married an Egyptian woman in Upper Thebes, and there, in various books, introduced the doctrines of Empedocles and Pythagoras into Christianity. He had a pupil named Buddas or Terebinthus, who went to Babylon, added Persian and other Eastern elements to the system, declared that he was born of a virgin, and was finally hurled down a precipice by a devil, leaving his books and a slave boy named Cubricus in the hands of the woman with whom he lodged. The woman enfranchised the slave boy, who, having read the books of Buddas, travelled in Persia, took the name of Manes, and added

[1] The first notice of Manes is in Euseb. *H. E.* vii. 31. The *Acta Archelai* (about 335), quoted by Cyrill. Hieros. *Catech.* vi. (Routh, *Rel. Sacr.* v. 3-206), are quite fabulous. They profess to be a discussion of Mani with Archelaus, Bishop of Cascar. Eastern books have brought many facts to light since Beausobre's *Hist. of Manicheism.* The best modern authority is Flügel, *Mani, Seine Lehre u. Seine Schriften*, Leipz. 1828. See, too, Baur, *Das Manichäische Religionssystem*, Tübing. 1831; Neander, *Ch. Hist.* ii. 157-195 (E.T.); Bp. Lightfoot, *Colossians*, pp. 390-396.

fresh elements of folly to the system.[1] He meant to be a reformer of Zoroastrianism, and adopted the central belief of the Zendavesta. He believed in the existence of an Ormuzd (Ahura-Mazda) and an Ahriman (Angro-Mainyus), a good and an evil deity, a principle of light and a principle of darkness, which he identified respectively with spirit and matter. There can be no doubt that he consciously incorporated some Christian elements into his system, and also that he shows Buddhist influences in the doctrines of purification by metempsychosis and by "gnosis," in the organisation of his followers, and in certain pantheistic views and practices. He was persecuted both by the Christians and the Magians, and was finally flayed alive, by the order of Bairam, about the year 275.

Amid all uncertainties and confusions, we may perhaps assume that Mani started from Parsism and tried to fuse it with ascetic Christianity, but that he afterwards, in his travels, became acquainted with Buddhism, and that the finer teachings of that religion led him to merge his Dualism into a sort of pantheistic Monism. "From one of the grottos consecrated to Buddhism he issued forth with those symbolic pictures which were designed to represent the doctrines revealed to him."[2]

The original essence of his system was antichristian, for it was Dualism, not Monotheism.[3] He divided the universe into two kingdoms, the kingdom of light, with its subordinate aeons and angels, and the kingdom of darkness, with its powers of evil. Seeking in vain to fathom the mystery of the origin of evil, he attributed it to the absolute causality of all being. He declared that there were eternal principles—light, which was good, and matter, which was evil; and that the existing universe was the common product of them both. The impulse to its production came from the restless agitation of the evil principle, and the modes of its creation were set forth in fantastic symbolism. The mikrokosm of man was analogous to the makrokosm of the universe. In man the spirit or "the inward man" was the representative of light imprisoned in the evil matter of the body. Concupiscence, the tendency to sensualism, was caused by the

[1] Socr. *H. E.* i. 21. On the guesses about the word Terebinthus, see Neander, ii. 204 (E.T.)

[2] Neander, ii. 208, who adds that those emblems (Ertenki-Mani) were long preserved in lively remembrance among the Persians.

[3] Titus Bostr. *c. Manich.* i. κακίαν ἀντέστησεν αὐτῷ (τῷ θεῷ) ἀγένητον ἀγενήτῳ.

triumph of his *material* being; and this was necessitated by the reproduction of his race, so that marriage became of necessity the propagation of sin, since it led to the birth of souls which vainly struggled in the fetters of the flesh.

But though the world represents the partial triumph of evil over good, yet it involves the ultimate triumph of the good over the evil; for the good, though fettered, oppressed, entombed, never ceases to struggle, and thereby to ameliorate and modify the evil, until finally the evil will be reduced to utter impotence. Every flower that blossoms is a triumph of the light; every soul that overcomes sin and seeks after God is a victory of the good. God achieves for the soul what the sun achieves for the flower. Manicheism was meant to represent the process through which evil was obliterated by the onward and upward progress, the physical and moral elevation of human life. The universe is matter organised with a view to the protection of the Divine essence. It concentrates all the means of redemption and deliverance for the captive and imprisoned soul by the powers in which the forces of the light have become predominant. These powers are in the material world the sun and moon, the light-ships of heaven, storing up all the elements of light uncontaminated by matter; and in the spiritual world, Christ, Mani, and the elect. The Manicheans freely used the name of Christ, but it was with them the mere adoption of a symbolic phrase. Their Christ was not the Christ of the Gospels. He was to them the spirit of the sun, the light-spirit from the pure light-element of God; not "very man," but only clothed with a corporeal semblance. Christ on the Cross meant to them nothing but an emblem of the sufferings of every soul which strives to become free; and since they held fantastic notions of the joyous and peaceful innocence of the vegetable kingdom, every tree was regarded as a cross on which Jesus hung, and which implicitly contained His body and His blood.[1]

In the system of the Manichees, it had been the main work of Christ to reveal the highest truths whereby men could be set free; but these truths had been speedily forgotten, so that a new and final revelation was necessary. This had been given through Mani, whom they regarded as the Paraclete whom Christ had promised to send into the world.[2]

[1] Aug. *in Psalm. cxl.* "Et ipse est Christus, crucifixus in toto mundo."

[2] *Acta Archel.* (Routh, *Rel. Sacr.* v. 73, 74). He did not mean that he was the

The "elect" or "perfect" (τέλειοι) were the sacerdotal caste. They were appointed for the perpetual renewal of Mani's influence, by ascetic abstinence from marriage, drink, and animal food. The "hearers" were those in whom the light-process had only begun, so that they were intermediate between the mankind of matter and the chosen ones, to whom alone were entrusted the mysteries and the peculiar service of the sect. The elect were those who, living in celibacy, poverty, and abstinence, enjoyed to the full the truth, knowledge, and reason which were the watchwords of the Manichees. They boasted of an absolute purity, symbolised by "the three seals"—of the mouth, which was henceforth to be clean from all evil words, and from all but vegetable food; of the breast, from which all sensuality was excluded; and of the hands, which were to be pure from unrighteous deeds, and from every injury done to the life of nature,[1] since, in their view, every furrow made by the ploughshare, every sweep of the scythe, every plucking of a fruit or a flower, was a deathful wound inflicted on the cross of light which was expanded throughout all nature.[2]

Pure souls set free by knowledge from the curse of evil matter passed first to the sun, then to the starry heavens, finally into the primeval light. Unpurified and undelivered souls had to work out their purification by endless transmigrations, in which they passed through the bodies of animals and plants. Finally, the world would be burned up, and resolved into its original elements of light and matter; but the powers of darkness would thenceforth be reduced to impotence, and feeling their powerlessness would struggle no longer with the powers of light, but only with themselves.

In many of these fancies we might have seen nothing but the necessary imperfection of a sincere philosophy, vainly struggling with insoluble questions. But the whole system was irreconcilable with Christianity. The Manichees used their dialectic ability to disparage the Old Testament,[3] and to prove that the original

Holy Spirit, but that he was the promised prophet of perfection. The "Letter of the Foundation" began "Mani, called to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ, through the election of God the Father. These are the words of salvation from the eternal and living fountain." See Aug. *c. Ep. Fundamenti*, 5.

[1] Aug. *De Mor. Man.* 10.

[2] On the fantastic follies to which such views led, see Aug. *c. Faust.* v. 6, vi. 4; Epiphan. *Haer.* xvi. 28.

[3] Photius, *Cod.* 179: *τὴν δὲ παλαίαν γραφὴν κωμῳδεῖ.*

revelation, of which it only contained a few discernible traces, had been incurably falsified by Jewish monotheists. They were radically opposed to the demand for faith, declaring that they themselves were placed by reason in possession of certain knowledge. In the Gospels also they declared that there were multitudes of Jewish interpolations and contradictions, especially in the genealogies and in the recorded discourses of Jesus. But all the passages in which St. John and St. Paul speak of the contrasts between Light and Darkness, the Flesh and the Spirit, they claimed in support of their own Dualism, of which they believed these parts of the New Testament to contain a primitive revelation. Hence they looked upon themselves as the only true disciples of Christ. But their Christ was only a Docetic Christ "who appeared in the form of man but was not man."[1] It was part of the danger and evil of their system that they made the freest use of all the language of Christianity in senses wholly different from those which Christians attached to them, and there is too much reason to believe that some of the mysterious practices which were concealed from the "auditors," but were known to "the elect," were of a peculiarly loathly and abhorrent description. In the Christian festivals they took little interest. Their great day—known as "the Pulpit" (*βῆμα*)—was the feast of Mani, when they all prostrated themselves before a gorgeously draped seat, ascended by five steps, which perhaps symbolised the five elements.[2]

It will be seen at a glance that such a system, with its keen rationalism, its boast of illumination, its richly imaginative symbols, its flattery of the pride of intellect, its constant appeals to liberty, truth, and wisdom, had a strong fascination for many minds. It cannot be denied that, if we were left without any revelation to guide us, Dualism might appear to be—as it did to John Stuart Mill—the most reasonable explanation of the phenomena of a universe in which good and evil, light and darkness, life and death, Gerizim and Ebal, blessing and cursing, divide the life of man. It belongs, in fact, to "a vast indefinite spiritual and intellectual movement, which makes itself felt more or less

[1] Faustus, the Manichee, taunts the Christians (Aug. *c. Faust.* xviii.) with banishing reason, blindly believing everything, and being as much afraid to separate true from false as children are of a ghost.

[2] Epiphan. *Haer.* lxvi. 28. Cyrill. Hier. *Catech.* vi. Aug. *Haer.* xlvi. *c. Ep. Fundam,* 8 ; *c. Faust.* xviii. 5.

in the development of every thinking mind." Even Christianity fully recognises the existence and the intensity of evil powers, while it offers us the deliverance from them;[1] but Christianity refers us to the future life for a solution of that riddle of the universe which our limited intellects are here incapable to solve. It was the boast of the Manichees, who in the fourth century had become a powerful and numerous body, that they alone had grasped the key of this mystery; and it was one main work of Augustine to show that their professed solution, not to mention the absurdity of its scientific assumptions, was mixed up with the most puerile fancies, and involved greater difficulties, contradictions, and absurdities, than those which it vainly attempted to remove. He offered a different solution of the problem, and his solution has been accepted in its main features, though not in every detail, by the whole Christian world.

Manicheism seems to have spread with great rapidity. As far back as 287 Diocletian had published an edict against it as "a new and unheard-of monster which has come to us from the Persians, a hostile people, and has perpetrated many misdeeds."[2]

Already, as we have seen, Augustine had written three treatises against the Manichees in 388, during the year of his sojourn in Rome, and a fourth—the unsuccessful attempt to explain Genesis by the allegoric method—at Tagaste. When he became a presbyter, in 392, he felt still more deeply the duty of refuting them. His book *On the Usefulness of Believing* was an endeavour to win back Honoratus, who had followed him into Manicheism, by showing the dignity of that principle of faith which the Manichees despised, and by exposing the absurdity of their opinion that the Old Testament was mainly composed of a mass of interpolations. The weakness of the book consisted in its confusion of "faith" as a principle with "the faith" as a compact deposit of doctrines. His next book, *On the Two Souls*, turns on the question of Dualism and Monotheism, and develops the deep conception of evil as being nothing but a negation, and therefore as having its origin in the concupiscence of the will, and not in the causality of God. He treats it as belonging to

[1] Take, for instance, such phrases as "the god of this world," 2 Cor. iv. 4. The Jews sometimes went so far as to speak of Satan as *El acheer*, "the *other* god."

[2] This edict is mentioned by Ambrosiaster *On* 2 *Tim. iii.* 7; see Neander, *Ch. Hist.* ii. 198; Gieseler, i. 228.

the impulse, but not to the being of the soul. A third book, *Against Adimantus*, is an attempt to refute the asserted irreconcilability of the Old and New Testaments by proving their relative agreement. The only true and complete method of doing this, by regarding the Old Testament as a progressive but incomplete and imperfect revelation, was unsuspected by St. Augustine, who was less strong as an expositor than as a dogmatist. The historic method of viewing revelation, though distinctly intimated in the magnificent proem to the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in other incidental utterances of the greatest Apostles, remained undeveloped and only partially understood by the Church from the time that the narrower Western theologians succeeded in crushing Theodore of Mopsuestia and the school of Antioch, down to the days of Nicolas of Lyra, who died in 1340. The triumph of Latin theology was the death of rational exegesis.

Augustine did not rely on his pen only. He was incessantly challenging heretics to personal disputations, which were taken down by shorthand writers, and widely distributed. It is not astonishing that Augustine was fond of discussion, or that his opponents were far from eager to accept his challenges. Such debates are in nine cases out of ten idle and useless. Each side claims the victory, and the actual or apparent victory is often declared to be on the side of the sharpest dialectician or the readiest talker, quite apart from the real merits of the case. Augustine, a clear and consistent thinker, a powerful logician, a trained orator, a man of perfect sincerity and serene self-confidence, who spoke amid a crowd of admirers in cities where he had attained an influence, would have been a formidable antagonist even had his cause been as weak as it was strong.

When he became a presbyter of Hippo, the Manichean Fortunatus was so much beloved that many embraced his views, and lived in Hippo to enjoy his teaching.[1] Augustine challenged him to a debate, and he was reluctantly obliged by the pressure of his followers to accept the challenge. The discussion turned on the abstract question "whether there could be two co-eternal and contrary natures"; and since the Manichees rejected authority, it was to be discussed on the grounds of reason. This was debated for two days in Sept. 392, before a large audience assembled in the Baths of Lossius. Augustine insisted

[1] *Retractt.* i. 16.

on the argument, already mentioned, which he had learnt from his friend Nebridius. If the Supreme God could be injured by the evil He was not inviolable; if He could not be injured He ought not to have placed souls, which are a part of His substance, in bodies which the Manicheans declared to be essentially evil. Fortunatus was wholly incapable of meeting such an antagonist as Augustine; he was overcome, shamed, and silenced. He left the city in deep mortification; many of his followers came over to the Catholic Church, and Manicheism ceased to be formidable in the city of Hippo.

After this Augustine was so much entangled in the Donatist controversy that he took no overt step against the Manichees till after he had become bishop. But in the year 404 he challenged Felix, one of their "elect," who had perhaps been appointed successor to Fortunatus. As Manicheism was now interdicted by the State,[1] Augustine had Felix completely in his power, and all the more because he was not a man of much education. The Bishop of Hippo said to him plainly, "You must join the Catholic Church, or go," and Felix had therefore no choice but to maintain his faith during a discussion of two days in the cathedral.[2] Augustine repeated the old argument of Nebridius, and Felix was entirely crushed. Nevertheless the management of the discussion gives the impression of unfairness and want of consideration, and the victory is not one which shows Augustine in his most favourable light.[3]

He wrote several other books on the same subject. His criticism on the Letter of Mani, known as *The Foundation*, which is chiefly remarkable for the charitable tone towards those in whose belief he once had shared, contains the memorable but not very happy assertion that Augustine would not have believed the Gospel had he not been moved thereto by the authority of the Church. He here shows himself far less wise than Luther, who placed the Church as far below Christ as the creature is below the creator. If the Catholic faith depended so exclusively on external authority, many a Manichee might prefer a faith which he believed to be consentaneous with his own heaven-

[1] A law of Theodosius, in which the ill-omened name of "Inquisitors" first occurs, threatened some sects of Manichees with death: "summo supplicio et inexpiabili poenâ jubemus affligi." *Cod. Theodos.* viii.; Milman, *History of Christianity*, iii. 301.

[2] It is not known whether he is the Felix with whom Augustine deals in *Ep.* lxxix.

[3] See *Ep.* ccxxxvi.

bestowed reason—with the spirit of man, which is the candle of the Lord.

The most important of Augustine's anti-Manichean writings is the work *Against Faustus*, in thirty-three books. He wrote it in answer to urgent requests, since every one regarded Faustus as the leading Manichean teacher of his day,[1] and his book contained some of the most formidable criticisms of the sect against the lives of the patriarchs and other parts of the Bible. Faustus also made some powerful and thoroughly true remarks, which it would have been well if the Church had accepted as a warning against the fatally increasing tendency to set dogma above holiness, orthodoxy above morals. "I have learnt," he said, "to despise silver and gold; I carry no money in my purse; I am content with my daily bread; I take no thought for the morrow; I have no cares about food or clothing; and you ask me whether I accept the Gospel. You see a man poor and patient, a man of pure heart, a sufferer, hungry, thirsty, persecuted and hated for righteousness' sake, and you doubt whether I accept the Gospel. But you say, 'To accept the Gospel means not only to obey its commandments, but also to believe everything which is written in the Gospel, and therewith, first, that God was born.' We reply that Faith consists of two parts—partly in Word, that is, in knowledge of the Person of Christ; and partly in Works, namely, in keeping the commandments. See then how much loftier and harder a part I have chosen for myself, and how far lower and easier a part you have chosen for yourself. Naturally the multitude streams to you and departs from me, because they know not that the Word of God stands not in word but in power. Why then do you molest me, who have undertaken the difficult part of faith, and left the easier part to you as to the weak? But you say, 'I hold the part which you have abandoned as the most important and essential for the obtaining of salvation, namely, the knowledge that Christ, God in Christ, was born.' Well, then, we will ask Christ Himself, and learn to know out of His mouth the condition of our salvation. 'Who, O Christ, shall enter into Thy Kingdom?' He answers, 'He who doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.'" It was an obvious answer that faith in word, faith showing itself in the right apprehension of doctrine, was a direct aid to faith in works; nevertheless Faustus, heretic as he was, here expresses

[1] See *supra*, p. 320.

nobly and evangelically one essential factor of the truth, and there can be no greater curse to any Church than the depreciation of welldoing in comparison with orthodox doctrine. The worst of heretics is not the incorrect thinker but the bad man. It may be that thousands of those who have been burnt for holding error in things dubious have been far truer Christians than those who have consigned them to the flames. Unhappily the influence of Augustine was a powerful factor in the tendency which ultimately set the authority of tradition above the independence of the enlightened reason, and correctness of dogma above purity of life.

The little book *On the Nature of the Good* is an enforcement of the argument which Augustine regarded as so decisive against the Manichees, namely, the supreme, unchangeable, incorruptible nature of God, and the origin of evil in the freedom of the human will. To overthrow the boasted holiness of the Manichees he tells some terrible stories of their asserted depravity in Paphlagonia and Gaul.[1] It must, however, be borne in mind that Augustine, when he was a Manichee, though he heard of things which seemed to indicate ordinary profligacy, had never seen a trace of the enormities which he denounces.

In the year 405 he wrote his last book against the Manichees which he also regarded as his best—the answer to Secundinus.[2] Secundinus, a Roman, had written to express profound admiration for Augustine's eloquence, but reprobation for the style of his arguments. He defends the Manichees and disparages the Catholics, roundly charging Augustine with never having understood the real views of the sect which he opposed. "You are fighting," he said, "not against Mani, but against Hannibal or Mithridates." Augustine, in his answer, takes but little notice of the personalities of Secundinus, but defends the Church and refutes the heresy with great force. The spirit of Eastern illuminism differed very widely from that of Christian faith.[3]

The chief results of the whole long-continued controversy were the overthrow of the doctrine of Dualism; the establishment of the Supreme Unity of God; the apprehension of evil as an unsubstantial negation; and the tracing of the source of evil to human imperfection. Augustine proves that sin exists

[1] *De Nat. Boni*, 47. [2] *Retractt.* ii. 10.

[3] The Yezedees or Devil-worshippers of Mosul are believed to be remnants of Manichean sects, and this system left its traces in Mohammedanism.

neither in God, nor in our own bodily nature, nor in the nature of things which are in themselves indifferent, but in the weakness of our human will. On the questions of election and reprobation, of freedom and foreknowledge, into which the controversy naturally led, Augustine throws no real light. By far the greater part of what has been confidently propounded on these subjects is

"Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy."

XVII

Continued

AUGUSTINE AND THE DONATISTS

"Ἵνα μὴ ᾖ σχίσμα ἐν τῷ σώματι."—1 Cor. xii. 25.

SECTION X

The deplorable Donatistic controversy which troubled the greater part of Augustine's episcopal life was of a wholly different character from that with the Manichees. The questions which it involved were ecclesiastical not metaphysical. They affected Church order rather than fundamental belief. They had their origin in furious party spirit rather than in profound speculation.[1]

The schism of the Donatist (so called from Donatus of Cava Nigra, who presided at the Council of Cirta) had now raged for nearly a century. It began in the persecution of Diocletian, who, in the edict of 303, had ordered the Christians to give up their religious books under pain of death. This law was strongly enforced in Africa. Some Christians evaded it; others, among whom were some of the clergy, gave up their Bibles, and were called by the scornful name of *Traditores*. They defended their conduct by passages in the Old Testament, and by the argument that a man's life is more sacred and precious than a written book. The condemnation of their weakness was all the more

[1] On this whole controversy, see Ribbeck, *Donatus u. Augustinus, oder der erste entscheidende Kampf zwischen Separatismus und Kirche*, 2 vols. Elb. 1858. A brief sketch of the historic origin of the schism is given by Gibbon, cl. xxi. The chief original sources are Aug. *Brevic. Coll. Dic.* 3, ch. 12, *Epp.* xliii. clxii., *Haeres.* lxiv., c. *Ep. Parmen.* i. 3, *in Crescon.* ii. 1; Optatus, *De Schismate Donat.* i. (see Wordsworth, *Ch. Hist.* i. 404 *sqq.*)

severe because at that time the Montanists had filled Africa with the spirit of ferocious zeal. Mensurius, Bishop of Carthage, deceived the Pagan commissioners by giving up *heretical* books, concealing the others; but he and his archdeacon, Caecilian, had given deeper offence by opposing the extravagant honours heaped by Christians, and especially by women, on the imprisoned confessors. Many of these were persons of no real worth, and the motive of some had been mere vanity and a superstitious desire to purchase an easy forgiveness for lifelong delinquency. It was therefore deemed undesirable by the bishop that they should be treated as though they were saints and half divine. These "confessors" consequently did their utmost to undermine Mensurius, and they were aided by a wealthy and bigoted widow named Lucilla, whom the bishop had exasperated by reproving her for kissing the bone of a supposed martyr before the Eucharist. "At that time," says Optatus of Mileum, one of our chief authorities, "the anger of a perturbed woman generated the schism, faction nourished it, and avarice confirmed it."[1]

On the death of Mensurius in 311 Caecilian had been somewhat hastily consecrated bishop by Felix of Aptunga. The Numidian bishops had been absent when he was chosen, and they made common cause against him with Lucilla, and a body of jealous presbyters and churchwardens (*seniores plebis*) from whom he had demanded the restitution of certain plate and other Church property. They said that he was half a *traditor* himself, and had been consecrated by Felix, whom they charged with the same offence. He offered to refute all the charges brought against him, and said that if they could prove that his consecration was irregular he would come to them and be consecrated again. "Let him come for imposition of hands," said Purpurius, a Numidian bishop notorious for his frantic language, "and we will break his head by way of penance."[2] No reconciliation was possible with ruffians of this stamp. They therefore consecrated a favourite of Lucilla, the reader Majorinus, and, on his death in

[1] Opt. i. 19.

[2] At the synod of Cirta in 305 the presiding bishop, Secundus, had accused Purpurius of having murdered two nephews. "I am not to be frightened," he replied, "by such questions; I have killed and will kill all who stand in my way." At this strange synod another *traditor* was appointed Bishop of Cirta. Yet these very bishops joined in the attack on Caecilian! The Council of Eliberis (Elvira), at which Hosius was present, and which passed important canons on Church discipline, was held about the same time.

315, a second Donatus, who excluded Caecilian from the Church and headed the schism with such furious and eccentric ability that it became known by his name.

In 312, Constantine, by the advice of Hosius of Cordova, endeavoured to end the schism, and told the Proconsul of Africa to put it down by force. As the Donatists appealed that they should not be condemned unheard, he entrusted the case to Melchiades, Bishop of Rome, who in A.D. 313, with the approval of eighteen other bishops, decided for Caecilian, but did not exclude the Donatists from the communion of the Church. The Donatists refused to abide by the judgment, because nothing had been said about their chief objection, which was that Felix, the consecrating bishop, had been a *traditor*. Constantine then directed that Felix should be tried at Carthage, and the whole dispute submitted to another council at Arles. Felix was acquitted at Carthage, and the Donatists were condemned at Arles (A.D. 314). As they again appealed to Constantine to hear the case in person, he consented, though with reluctance, and having heard Caecilian and Donatus plead their cause before him at Milan in 316, he once more decided in favour of Caecilian. But to end the whole quarrel he imprisoned both of them at Brescia, and sent two bishops in whom he had confidence to consecrate some new and undisputed prelate in their place. Meanwhile, however, Donatus escaped from custody and Caecilian followed him. Constantine, thoroughly disgusted, ordered the Imperial Count Ursacius to suppress the Donatists with the sword; but he found it impossible to do so. In 321 they wrote to the Emperor that they refused to have anything to do with his "scoundrelly bishop."[1] Donatus must have been more than the mere haughty self-seeker whom his enemies describe. Augustine himself admits his sincerity and influence, and compares his character to that of Cyprian. He won many adherents, and the indignation against secular violence kindled the counter-fanaticism of the wild *Circumcelliones* who embraced his cause and spread terror far and wide in Africa for many years, mingling their frantic follies with the grossest excesses of open sensuality. The cause of the Donatists must not be judged by these lawless and ferocious marauders, though some of the bishops connived at and even utilised their frenzy. But finding that the schism only grew worse, Constantine rushed from the excess of severity

[1] Aug. *Brevic. Coll.* iii. 39: "antistiti ipsius nebuloni."

to the excess of tolerance, washed his hands of the whole business, and saying that he left it to the judgment of God, actually built for the Catholics, at his own cost, a church to make up for one of which the Donatists had dispossessed them by violence! They grew so rapidly in numbers and influence that at a synod in 330 they had 270 bishops present.

Under such circumstances the Donatists soon filled Africa, though every other Church of Christendom acknowledged Caecilian as the true Bishop of Carthage.

Constantine died in 337, and Constans tried to smooth matters down by gifts and flattery. He sent two commissioners, Paulus and Macarius, to promote peace; but while Gratian, Bishop of Carthage, hailed them as "servants of God," a Donatist writer describes them as two wild beasts, who brought with them "the polluted murmur of persecution." Donatus rejected the gifts of these commissaries with the words, "What has the Church to do with the Caesar?" The fanaticism increased. The Circumcellions behaved like the Anabaptists and Fifth Monarchy men of the Reformation age, and the civil power was obliged to reassert itself. The chief bishops were expelled, and Donatus died in exile. Julian, in order to promote dissensions among the hated "Galileans," allowed all banished bishops to return, and the Donatists came back in triumph headed by their new bishop, Parmenianus. They seized their lost churches, and to purify them from the contamination of Catholic possession, washed their walls and floors, and even dug up and ejected the bodies of the dead. Gratian renewed the edicts against them in 377, but they grew in numbers until they began to split into "subdichotomies of petty schism." They soon became a party with nothing left but a nominal principle, which alike in theory and in practice they had repeatedly violated. They began in religious rigorism, and ended in unreasoning fury.

Optatus, Bishop of Mileum, had written seven books on the Donatist schism, but as yet no one had risen to confute their whole theory. This task was undertaken by Augustine after he became Bishop of Hippo, in 396. There was need for his intervention, for at Hippo the Donatists were more numerous than the Catholics. The province was specially afflicted with the fury of the Circumcellions, who claimed the impulse of inspiration for their worst atrocities. The quarrel was so universal as to introduce the most painful divisions into the heart of families.

Causes of dispute were constantly arising between the antagonistic communities. At one time Augustine complains that the Donatists had received and rebaptized a brutal and dissolute youth who had murdered his own mother. At another time a subdeacon, a bad character, had been expelled from the Church but rebaptized by the Donatists, and had openly joined a villainous band of Circumcellions. At another, Augustine had been assailed with maledictions by a Donatist presbyter, and called a perverter and a *traditor* because, at the request of a father, he tried to persuade a female catechumen to return to the Church. These incidents led to internecine opposition between Christians, united in creed though differing in discipline. But Augustine, swayed by the principle of authority, was specially scandalised by the triumph of disunion. He began to preach against the Donatists, to write against them, and to challenge them to discussions. At first he addressed them in the friendliest way, and repudiated all recourse to violence or State interference. It was only at a later stage that his views deteriorated until he had learnt to oppose party spirit in the fiercest spirit of party, and to invoke the secular arm to rivet the fetters of resisting consciences. It was thus that the courteous reasoner became the oracle of persecuting intolerance.

The Donatist Bishop of Hippo at that time was the aged and blameless Proculeianus. Augustine at once wrote to invite him to a conference. At first he seemed inclined to discuss the questions at issue with only ten witnesses present on each side. But he changed his mind. He returned no answer to a highly respectful letter of Augustine, and suddenly broke off all intercourse with him.[1] Augustine in point of fact never succeeded in obtaining from the Donatists one of those public discussions in which he had been so successful against the Manichees. Once, indeed, at Tubursis, he had a friendly interchange of opinions with Fortunius, the excellent Donatist bishop; but the next day so many persons crowded to hear their conversation and so repeatedly interrupted it by exclamations and arguments that it had to be broken off and was never renewed. He was therefore obliged to have recourse to his pen. But it is doubtful whether any discussion would have removed the misconceptions which arose from fundamental differences of view. The Church of which the Donatists were mainly thinking was the ideal

[1] *Ep.* xxxiii.

invisible Church, which depends on the holiness of its members; the Church of which Augustine was thinking was the visible Church, with the notes of "catholicity" and apostolical succession.

Parmenian, who succeeded Donatus about 350, had written a celebrated letter against Tichonius, the author of the *Seven Rules of Exegesis*, which Augustine himself adopted.[1] In this letter he gave the Donatist version of the origin of the schism, and tried to prove from theory and from Scripture that it was a duty to separate from the "apostate" Catholics. In answer to this letter Augustine wrote in 400 his *Three Books against the Letter of Parmenian*, in which he gives the Catholic account of the origin of the schism, answers Parmenian's arguments, and turns against him his own Scripture proofs. In this book he lays down the rule that though the purity of the Church demands the punishment of individual sinners for their own good, yet when the bad are numerous it is impossible and wrong to use extreme measures against them, but the tares must be left to grow with the wheat until the harvest. He also shows that the Donatists had given up their own chief points of contention by admitting some of those who had left them without rebaptism,[2] and by sanctioning the violences of one of their bishops, Optatus, who had received the scornful nickname of the Gildonian Optatus, because of his close alliance with the Pagan general Gildo.[3]

Soon afterwards he wrote his *Seven Books on Baptism*, in which he shows against Donatists that the efficacy of the Sacrament is not affected by the unworthiness of the minister, and especially argues against the authority of Cyprian, who had induced a council at Carthage to reject the baptism of heretics.[4]

He was next compelled to answer a letter of Petilian, who had been a lawyer and a Catholic catechumen, but had been won over to the Donatist schism by the offer of the bishopric of Cirta. This man had attacked the Church in a contumelious manner, complaining of the injuries inflicted on the Donatists, and calling the Catholics a body of *traditors*. The letter was regarded as a powerful polemic, and Augustine in three books refuted as much of it as he had been able to obtain. Petilian was so infuriated

[1] Tichonius (see *Hist. of Interpr.* pp. 22-26) was a Donatist, but he disapproved of the extremes adopted by his party.

[2] *C. litt. Parmen.* ii. 4.

[3] In this book Augustine mentions the almost total extirpation of Paganism, i. 15.

[4] See *supra*, i. 236-239.

by arguments which he could not answer that he took refuge in a violent personal attack on Augustine himself, *summâ inopiâ copiosus.*"[1] He raked up every rumour and scandal which he could find to his discredit, charging him with crimes which he had never committed, upbraiding him with all that was darkest in his own *Confessions*, saying that he had been a Manichean presbyter, and had in that capacity been guilty of many enormities. He compared him to the orator Tertullus;[2] sneered at his specious dialectics; revived the old calumnies on which Megalius relied when he opposed his consecration; accused him of literary dishonesty; abused him for instituting monasteries; and in general overwhelmed him with a turbid stream of atrocious calumnies. The attack recoiled on himself. It at once revealed to all but the dullest understandings that to the arguments of Augustine he had no reply to offer. His slanders only proved the baseness of his own mind, and admitted of an easy refutation. Augustine replied to them with the utmost calmness and dignity. He declined to join Petilian in a contest of mutual mud-throwing. "Were I," he said, "to answer your revilings by my revilings, we should then simply be two revilers, and we should inspire the serious with repugnance and the frivolous with malignant delight." He will not defend himself further than by saying that whereas he repudiated his life previous to his baptism, and did not desire to remember it except to glorify God's mercy, he could appeal to all who knew anything about his subsequent conduct when he said with St. Paul, "I know nothing against myself."[3] As regards Petilian's attacks on the Church, he shows that they proved nothing with respect to the real controversy, and that, so far as they had any truth in them, they told as strongly against the Donatists as against the Catholics.

He continued the controversy in 402 in his book *On the Unity of the Church*, and in his four books in answer to the grammarian Cresconius on baptism and rebaptism. Unfortunately his arguments produced no appreciable results. The parties faced each other with an antagonism all the more implacable because the ultimate questions at issue between them were secondary and ecclesiastical. Violence became the order of the day. Each side tried to proselytise. The outrages of the Circumcellions were repaid in the same coin, and each party said to the other,

[1] *C. litt. Petil.* iii. 24, *Retractt.* ii. 25.
[2] Acts xxiv. 1.
[3] 1 Cor. iv. 4.

as Luther said to Zwingli, "You have a different spirit from ours." It seemed as if the glory and usefulness of the Church of northern Africa would suffer utter shipwreck on the rock of schism. There were rival bishops—a Donatist and a Catholic—in every large town.

Augustine and other African bishops would have been glad of any reasonable compromise. In 401 a council at Carthage left each bishop to adopt the best means in his power for procuring unity. But patience and charity were lacking. The Catholics tried to set the Donatist congregations against their leaders, and to secure the aid of the civil power. They sowed the wind and they reaped the whirlwind. Such was the fury of the Donatists that the lives of the bishops were endangered. The excesses of the Circumcellions—who, like the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century and the Camisards of the eighteenth, arrogated to themselves the exclusive title of saints—would be incredible, if they were not a recurring phenomenon at times of religious excitement. They traversed northern Africa in gangs of idle and plundering rascality, which they disguised under the pretence of religious zeal. Pillage, murder, and conflagration accompanied their footsteps, until their war-cry of "Praise to God," and the sight of the huge clubs which they called "Israels," became the terror of the country. They confounded suicide with martyrdom, and often gave to the hapless traveller the choice between murdering them or being himself murdered.

On one occasion Augustine's friend Possidius, Bishop of Calama, was attacked by an armed band led by a presbyter related to the Donatist bishop. He was compelled to take refuge with his friends in a farm, which was immediately surrounded by armed men. After an attempt to set it on fire, the door was burst open, the horses and cattle killed, several persons wounded, and Possidius himself dragged down from the upper story, insulted and beaten.[1] Restitutus, a Donatist presbyter, having gone over to the Church, was attacked by Circumcellions headed by their clergy, dragged out of his house, brutally beaten, dressed in a coat of rushes which they called a *buda*, thrust into a muddy pit, and kept for twelve days in the hands of his persecutors.[2] He was thenceforth regarded as a confessor, and afterwards as a martyr.[3] Another presbyter named Marcus, who had also left

[1] *C. Crescon.* iii. 50; Possid. *in Vit. Aug.* 12.
[2] *C. Crescon.* iii. 53.
[3] *Ep.* cxxxiii. 1.

the sect, was saved from murder by an opportune rescue.[1] Another converted presbyter named Marcianus only escaped their hands by flight, but their clergy seized his subdeacon and nearly stoned him to death, for which they were punished by having their houses razed to the ground.[2] The Circumcellions lay in wait for Augustine himself in one of his episcopal visitations. Had they succeeded in their ambush he would probably have been murdered, but by a providential "accident" the guide of his party missed his way and took the wrong turning at a place where two roads met. Augustine arrived at his destination by a long and circuitous route, and thus escaped the plot. Servus-Dei, a bishop of Thubursica, in endeavouring to recover a church from the Donatists, had to fly for his life, and his aged father, who was a presbyter, died of the injuries which he then received.[3] Maximian, Bishop of Baga, in occupying a church assigned to the Catholics, had to take refuge under the altar from a band of armed Donatists. The altar was broken over him, he was beaten with its fragments, and after much violent treatment was stabbed in the groin with a dagger, and filled the sacred place with blood. He was only prevented from bleeding to death because the dust through which he was dragged coagulated over his wound. The Catholics, singing psalms, tried to rescue him, but the Donatists tore him from them, and supposing him to be dead, flung his body into a tower, where he lay senseless on a heap of refuse. Here he was found by a peasant, who with his wife removed him to their cottage and nursed him until he was healed of his ghastly wounds, of which the scars remained till the day of his death. He went to Rome to appeal for justice to the Emperor, and it was partly with reference to his case that Honorius passed at Ravenna in 405 the severe penal laws which the terrified Catholics now demanded at his hands. These "Edicts of Union," as they were called, forbade rebaptism on pain of confiscation of property, gave freedom to any slave whom his master compelled to join the Donatists, and enjoined the civil authorities to enforce a strict observance of these laws.

Under these circumstances the Donatists came over to the Church in large numbers, and in 407 another council of Carthage ordained that they should be received in peace; but the stronger-minded remnant, who would not accept fear as a reason for

[1] *Ep.* cv. 3.
[2] *Ep.* cv. 3; Possid. *Vit. Aug.* 12; *Enchir.* 5. [3] *C. Crescon.* iii. 47.

nominal conversion, regarded themselves as the "little flock," the "Church in the wilderness," and, welcoming every form of martyrdom, were driven into the extreme of party fanaticism.[1] Both sides show the deadly evil of religious controversy. The Donatists began as rigid Evangelicals, they ended as ruthless brigands; the Catholics began as tolerant Churchmen, and ended as bitter persecutors. Augustine himself, whose views in 404 had been mild and charitable, had become much less tolerant in 407. In answer to the remonstrances of his former friend Vincentius, who had become the Donatist Bishop of Cartennae, he now first used the evil and perversely sophistic arguments which were destined to be, for so many ages, the watchwords of religious persecution. Nothing, he said, was more compassionate and charitable than to repress and punish heresy by the aid of the civil power, because, "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth," and because the State was now Christian, and it was, therefore, its present duty to protect the truth and punish its enemies!

In his own diocese the adoption of strong measures was fatally unsuccessful. It was devastated by bands of Circumcellions. They set fire to buildings, they destroyed harvests, they forced persons to receive their baptism. Armed with all kinds of horrible weapons, they attacked and ransacked the houses of the orthodox clergy, seized them, beat them, wounded them, and flung them away half-dead. With an excess of atrocity they also filled the eyes of many with chalk, and finding that they recovered from this treatment, they afterwards mixed the chalk with vinegar, and thus blinded them by slow tortures. "They live as robbers," complained the clergy of Hippo to the Donatist primate, "they die as Circumcellions, they are honoured as martyrs, and yet we never heard that even robbers have blinded those whom they plundered." They blamed their enemies for their own suicides, and did not blame themselves for the murders they committed. Nor were their wrath and despair confined to this diocese. In Baga they burned a church and flung into the fire the sacred books, the preservation of which, in the Diocletian persecutions, was the reason for founding their sect. In Liberalis they destroyed the church. At Cirta they destroyed all the altars. At Caesariana their bishop plundered the property of the Church, and

[1] *Ep.* cviii. 18.

at Prudentiana he destroyed four basilicas. At many places there were serious riots which ended in bloodshed. Such was the bitter fruit of religious persecution—

"Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!"[1]

The triumph of persecuting orthodoxy was shortlived. In 408 Stilicho, the great minister and general of the feeble Honorius, was murdered in consequence of a court intrigue, and, a year after, his successor Olympius was driven from power. Then followed a complete reaction in the court at Ravenna. In 409 the penal laws against the Donatists were repealed, and whole Churches of them at once seized the opportunity to abandon their hypocritical conversion. Honorius, in answer to yet another appeal, summoned a conference to meet in 410, at which Marcellinus, a friend of Augustine, was to hear and to decide the case as Imperial Commissary. It met in 411, and consisted of 279 Donatists and 286 orthodox bishops, for whom Petilian and Augustine were to be the respective spokesmen.

It was clear that such a conference, "over which," as Athanasius would have scornfully remarked, "a Count presided," could decide nothing. How would Augustine himself have felt had Marcellinus been an avowed and notorious Donatist, and a personal friend of Petilian? Would he, in that case, have preached the opening sermon, and promised that the orthodox bishops would resign their sees if the cause was decided against them? Marcellinus offered that there should be a second president. "We do not want two," answered Petilian, "for we never asked for even one."

The discussion of the first two days turned on the question which side had first invoked the civil power. On the third day the real points at stake—the origin of the schism, and the true purity of the Church—came under discussion. The discussion was perfectly hollow. It was rendered all the more tiresome because the Donatists said that they could not possibly sit down before so great a man as Marcellinus, so that he and the bishops had to remain standing all the first day; and the second day Petilian said that Scripture forbade them to sit down by the words, "I will not sit with the wicked." Indeed, the temper shown by the Donatists throughout was inexcusably bad. When Augustine, on the third day, began his speech

[1] For these events, see *Epp.* lxxxvi. lxxxviii. cviii.

with the word "brethren," Petilian repudiated it as an injury. They attacked Caecilian's memory, and yet declared that they would not enter into the history of the schism. Some of them proposed to interpret the word *Catholic* to mean those who kept the laws and observed the sacraments, but they were compelled into admitting that they did not believe the whole Church to be limited to Africa.

As a matter of course, after eighteen days' conference, Marcellinus decided against the Donatists, and Honorius confirmed his decision by the re-enactment of severe decrees. The Donatists protested that they refused to accept the arbitration of laymen in Church questions, and things went on as before. The Donatists answered the appeals of their opponents with bitter and ambiguous words. "I cannot prefer what you will," said Emeritus, "but I can will what I will."[1] Augustine began to speak of the orthodox victory in the Conference of Carthage. "Men can see from the records," answered Emeritus, "whether I was defeated or victorious, and whether I was defeated by the truth or suppressed by force." "Why, then, did you come here?" asked the Bishop of Hippo. "To give you this answer, once for all," replied Emeritus. Of what use was it to argue against the practical master of so many legions? When the Imperial Tribune threatened Gaudentius of Tamagunda with death unless he came over to the Church, "Know," he answered, "that, if you apply force against us, I and my people will go to our church and burn it over our own heads." "You had better make your escape," said the Tribune, "or you will be put to death." "We do not seek martyrdom," answered Gaudentius, "but we are quite prepared for it. It is only the hireling who fleeth because he seeth the wolf coming."[2] The incident gave rise to the last anti-Donatist writing of Augustine, *Against the Letters of Gaudentius*, which shows evident signs that he had begun to be tired out by the endless controversy. Gaudentius had deplored that, in consequence of the severity put into force against them, thousands of Donatists had been driven into a perfect frenzy of suicide. Augustine replies that more had come over to the Church than had committed suicide. The

[1] *Serm. ad Caesar. Eccl. plebem*, 1: "Non possum malle quod vultis, sed possum velle quod volo."

[2] Augustine told the Donatists that they could not be Christians because they complained that they had no place to flee unto! (*c. Gaudent.* i. 19).

Catholics held it better that "a few abandoned and desperate men should perish than that a vast number should be left to burn in Gehenna for belonging to a deadly schism! The Church would console herself by the peace she had acquired through severity, as David consoled himself for the death of Absalom."[1]

The incursion of the Vandals effected that termination of the schism which neither the lenity nor the persecution of the Church had been able to achieve. Sterner and sterner laws to suppress Donatism were passed by Honorius, and an inextinguishable and indomitable remnant still defied them. But, in 420, the Arian Vandals burst into Africa, and persecuted Donatists and orthodox alike. The opponents were united by common and frightful peril, and then first discovered that, accepting the same creed, believing in a common Saviour, it ought not to have been so insuperably difficult for them to combine. The last sparks of the schism were stamped out by the Saracens in the seventh century in the universal ruin which destroyed the Church of northern Africa.

Augustine had to face for many years the hatred of this party, because he exhausted every ecclesiastical, literary, and political method to secure their overthrow. The controversy brought into prominence a new set of questions as to the idea of the Church, and the relations between Church and State, which had only been partially stirred by the Montanist, Novatian, and Meletian schisms. The only doctrinal question incidentally involved was that of baptism. Augustine himself admitted that the Donatists were not heretics, although he regarded their schism as being no less culpable than heresy. The tedious and heated discussion had a bad effect alike on his temper and his theology. It made him severe where he had once been gentle, and narrow where once he had expressed larger views.

It had been the sincere desire of the early Donatists to keep the Church pure, and it was their sincere belief that no Church could be the true Church which was not so. Their first movement had shown a stern reaction against indifferentism, worldliness, and the slumber of discipline in the now victorious Church. Such a reaction was neither unnatural nor unworthy when we remember that all the great Fathers in succession admit that

[1] *C. Gaudent.* i. 32, *Ep.* cciv. 2.

the hour of the Church's political triumph had also been the commencement of her spiritual deterioration. Nevertheless the Donatists were in the wrong. Their belief that the unworthiness of ministers destroyed the efficacy of the sacraments led to cruel and monstrous conclusions. Their view was too haughtily zealous and pharisaic. It might almost be said to them, as Constantine said to Acesius, that "they had better get a ladder and try to go to heaven by themselves." They were separatists who had no objective proof of their pretensions to be the sole true Church, and whose subjective claims fell to the ground because they could only be tested by that knowledge of the heart which is in the power of none but God. If only a Church absolutely pure could claim to be the true Church, there could be no true Church at all. The brutalities of their Circumcellions, the violences of their Gildonian bishop Optatus, the dissoluteness, drunkenness, and suicide of many of their adherents, were sufficient to prove the impossibility of their ideal. Alike in their appeals to the State and their admission without rebaptism of their own sectaries, they had again and again abandoned the very principles on which they had been founded.

Having proved all this with unanswerable force in various writings, Augustine proceeded also to show that the orthodox Church was the true Church. Its objective existence centred not in the righteousness of all its members, but in Christ and His righteousness. If its ideal had been destroyed because there had been found a few *traditors* among its clergy, how yet more fundamentally must the claim of the Donatists have been destroyed by the abominations of the Circumcellions!

So far so good, but Augustine fatally injured a good cause when he adopted, without explanation and limitation, the hard, false, pharisaic assertion that only Churchmen could be saved. He had neither right nor warrant to confine by human and invented limitations the freedom of the Holy Spirit of God. And this error led him to others. He hazarded the assertion that for schismatics and heretics Christ's death was of no avail, and that their faith, their sacraments, even their sincere self-sacrifices and martyrdom, were perfectly valueless.[1] He came to regard the Christian presbyterate as endowed with a sort of ideal, impersonal holiness, and supernaturally sacerdotal power. He fell into the fatal error of thrusting the Church between the soul and God,

[1] *Ep.* clxxiii.

and thrusting the clerical caste between the laity and the Church. The exaggeration of the authority of bishops had begun with the letters of Ignatius, of which the interpolations show to what blasphemous lengths their folly had advanced. Cyprian had followed in this unfortunate direction. Sharing with most of the Fathers a complete unacquaintance with the progressive character of revelation, devoid of any true conception of the relation of the Old Testament to the New, he transferred to Christian ministers all the Mosaic notions which apply exclusively to hereditary priests. He applied the story of Korah to show that all heresies arise "from not obeying the Priest of God," who is "a Judge in the stead of Christ."[1] Tertullian had at least learnt from Montanism a clear view of the universal and unconfined workings of the Spirit, and said, "It is (only) the authority of the Church which has established a difference between the ordained and the multitude."[2] But Cyprian had in this respect entirely forgotten the lessons of his master, and Cyprian, not Augustine, must be regarded as the main founder of that dangerous tyranny which succeeded for so many centuries in robbing the laity of their Divine, inherent, indefeasible rights as a royal and universal priesthood. The Church which has begun to identify "the Church" with the clergy is on the high road to perversion of all that is most essential in Gospel truth.

While rightly rejecting the Donatist assertion of a Divine authorisation by dreams, miracles, and the hearing of prayers offered at the graves of the martyrs, he shows no real ground for claiming every passage which speaks of the Church in Scripture as though it applied to his own exclusively. His dialectics here become arbitrary and biassed, and possess no argumentative force. Nor are his objective notes of the Church much more decisive. The Donatists claimed the note of catholicity because they defined catholicity to mean that the Church possesses universal truth; Augustine made it consist objectively in universal diffusion and continuous existence, and subjectively in the episcopate and in charity. He distinguishes between the ideal and the visible Church, because the latter is as a herd in which there are both sheep and goats, and a net in which there are both good and bad fish. He wavers in his interpretation of the Rock on which Christ

[1] Cyprian, *Ep.* lxiii. The interpolated passage in id. *Ep.* xl. only shows the *direction* in which the ecclesiastical current had already begun to run.

[2] *De Exhort. cast.* 7.

built His Church. In some passages he explains it of Peter himself, and in others of Peter's confession. He seems to have held finally that Peter was meant, but only ideally as a representative of a true knowledge and confession of Jesus as the Christ. But Augustine's system breaks down because he wanted his Church to be catholic and yet exclusive, universal and yet Roman. He confuses, as men have done ever since, an ideal and a concrete, a real and a purely empiric, catholicity. He was unable to recognise that the Church is not one *fold* (αὐλή), nor was it ever promised or ever desirable that it should be gathered in one earthly fold; but that it is, always has been, and to the end of time ever will be, one flock (ποίμνη) of many folds.[1] It required a long experience of history to show that the main function of the Church is to meet and satisfy the varying religious needs of varying men in different ages; that unity is quite compatible with wide diversity; that different forms of organisation and service are a Divine necessity to prevent torpor and universal paralysis of independent thought; and that difference of spiritual attitude must be met by diversities of gifts and of administration. It took centuries for men to discover that "the Church of God is a congregation of faithful men wherein the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments are duly administered in all things necessary to the same"; that there never has existed, and never can exist, one branch of the Church which can claim the exclusive title of Catholic; and that the Catholic Church is that which is known to God only, and is not confined within the narrow pales of any single community. *Except* when the word Church is made co-extensive with all true seekers after God and all true children of God, whatever be the communion to which they belong, the assertion that men can only be saved "in the Church" is an arrogant and cruel falsehood. Yet it has led men to believe such inconceivable absurdities as that a true Church cannot exist without episcopacy, or that no Protestant, or no Roman Catholic, or no Nonconformist, can possibly be saved!

In that part of the controversy which touched on baptism Augustine may be regarded as entirely in the right. The whole Christian Church of the East and West has agreed that when it has been administered in its simple essentials it ought never to be administered again.[2]

[1] John x. 16.

[2] For Augustine's excellent remarks about Cyprian, and the way in which his

But there was another most important element of the controversy in which the theory of the Donatists, whatever may have been the inconsistencies of their practice, was right; and in which the Catholics, headed by Augustine, in his later, harder, more dogmatic, and episcopal spirit, were absolutely and with fatal consequences, though perhaps inevitably, in the wrong. The Church had no right to invoke the power of the State to persecute those who differed from itself. Heretics and orthodox in turn fell into this evil habit. In endeavouring to crush the independent prerogatives of the human conscience, they were often guilty of quenching the light of the Spirit and storming the very citadel of heaven.

Augustine must bear the fatal charge of being the first, as well as one of the ablest defenders of the frightful cause of persecution and intolerance. He was the first to misuse the words, "Compel them to come in," of the parable—a fragmentary phrase wholly unsuited to bear the weight of horror for which it was made responsible.[1] He was the first and ablest asserter of the principle which led to Albigensian crusades, Spanish armadas, Netherlands' butcheries, St. Bartholomew massacres, the accursed infamies of the Inquisition, the vile espionage, the hideous balefires of Seville and Smithfield, the racks, the gibbets, the thumbscrews, the subterranean torture-chambers used by churchly torturers who assumed "the garb and language of priests with the trade and temper of executioners," to sicken, crush, and horrify the revolted conscience of mankind. The spirit of Paganism was not intolerant. Libanius and Julian knew that fire and sword may make martyrs and may make hypocrites, but cannot change a man's real faith. They felt that *Deorum injuriae Dîs curae.* It is mainly because of his later intolerance that the influence of Augustine falls like a dark shadow across the centuries. It is thus that an Arnold of Citeaux, a Torquemada, a Sprenger, an Alva, a Philip the Second, a Mary Tudor, a Charles IX., and a Louis XIV. can look up to him as an authoriser of their enormities, and quote his sentences to defend some of the vilest crimes which ever caused men to look with horror on the religion of Christ and the Church of God.[2]

charity and humility rebuked the wild wilfulness of the Donatists who shared Cyprian's view about rebaptism, see *De Baptismo*, i. 28. [1] *Ep.* xciii.

[2] The name "inquisitor" throws its lurid shadow even over a law of Theodosius.

And his view was a fatal retrogression. There was no excuse for it except the involuntary and unconscious deterioration caused by the spirit of episcopal domination and priestly self-assertion. The old view of the Church had distinctly been Βία ἐχθρὸν Θεῷ —"Violence is hostile to God." The early Christians, in the days when they themselves were weak and persecuted, had always argued against the right to use force in questions of religion. This had been the view of Origen and of Athanasius. "Nothing," says Athanasius, "more forcibly marks the weakness of a bad cause than persecution."[1]

When Ambrose and Martin of Tours indignantly exclaimed against shedding the blood of heretics, and refused to communicate with those who had ordered the execution of the heretic Priscillianists, they were only continuing the early traditions of the Church. They shuddered at those who were "nominibus antistites re vera autem satellites atque adeo carnifices."[2] "It belongs," said Tertullian, "to the human right and natural power of each man to worship what he thinks right, and the religion of one is no advantage or injury to another."[3] Gregory of Nazianzus had always expressed his abhorrence of persecution, his determination to employ no methods but those of moral suasion. Even under Constantine, Lactantius had written that "Religion cannot be enforced; we must act with words rather than with blows, that the will may be with us. Nothing is so voluntary as religion."[4] And again, "We do not demand that any one should against his will worship our God, who is the God of all whether they will or no; nor are we angry if they worship Him not."[5] And again, "Religion is alone the seat in which Liberty has placed her home. It is a thing which, beyond all things else, is voluntary, nor can necessity be imposed on any one to worship what he does not wish. A man may perhaps pretend, he cannot will to do it."[6] Augustine himself in his earlier days had repeatedly argued that the true method of dealing with heretics was by reasoning and forbearance. How fierce would have been the indignation of the Christians if Julian had passed an edict inflicting capital punishment on all who practised the rites of Christianity! And yet Augustine asks the Donatists, "Which of us, which of you, does not praise the imperial laws against the sacrifices of Pagans? . . . The penalty for that impiety was

[1] *Hist. Arian.* iv. 7. [2] See *supra*, i. 483. [3] Tert. *ad Scap.* 2.
[4] Lact. *Instt.* v. 9. [5] Id. 20. [6] Id. *Epitome*, 24.

death."[1] "Summo supplicio et inexpiabili poena jubemus affligi" was a law as indefensible when Theodosius aimed it at Manichees as it was when Nero or Diocletian had aimed it at Christians.

The appeal to the arm of the law was suicidal, for it might at any time be turned against the orthodox, and then they would have had no right to complain. The Church was perfectly justified in appealing to the State for the protection of itself against Circumcellion marauders; she had a perfect right to claim that robbers and murderers should be punished and executed; but she had no right whatever to claim the suppression of Donatists as Donatists, or Manichees as Manichees. To treat the Church as superior to the State, and yet to use the State as a subordinate in doing its own unpleasant work, was a degradation to Church and to State alike. The excellent Bishop Optatus of Mileum had written far more truly, "The State is not in the Church, but the Church is in the State." Is any one so Erastian as to be able to read without a smile of indignation the decree of Theodosius, Gratian, and Valentinian II., in which "a rude Spanish soldier and two feeble boys" command the world in general to believe whatever is believed by Damasus, Bishop of Rome, and Peter, Bishop of Alexandria? The Donatist bishop Gaudentius wisely said, "God appointed prophets and fishermen, not princes and soldiers, to spread the faith." Augustine's best efforts could adduce no tittle of New Testament argument in favour of that irreligious persecution, which could only be purchased at the cost of religious independence. All he could offer was the overstrained and wholly irrelevant fragment of a parable, "Compel them to come in." That scrap of text and shred of metaphor, by the help of the supposition that by "the highways and hedges" were meant schisms and heresies, was made to bear the intolerable weight of guilt caused by the self-assertion, egotism, and opinionativeness of religious hatred! Of course Augustine had ready some arguments (such as they were) which he inferred from Scripture; for

> "In religion
> What damned error but some sober brow
> Will bless it and approve it with a text,
> Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?"

[1] *Ep.* xciii. See Milman's *Gibbon*, v. 114.

But they were almost exclusively derived from those Old Testament passages which, in the total absence of the historic conception of Scripture as containing the fragmentary records of a partial and progressive revelation, have been adduced to sanction almost every form of human crime. They were more worthy of such a writer as Julius Firmicus Maternus[1] than of the Bishop of Hippo. In his sanction of religious intolerance, in his appeal to persecution, Augustine fell behind the ablest of his contemporaries. Nay, in this matter Augustine might have learned wisdom from the Pagan sophist Themistius, who held that God left man's soul free to judge of religious truths; and even from the apostate Julian, who thought that "neither fire nor sword could change the fate of mankind," that "the heart disowns the hand which is compelled by terror to sacrifice, and that persecution only makes hypocrites and martyrs."[2] History had already shown with sufficient clearness that religious cruelty always provokes reprisals. Julian's one mistake in forbidding the Christians to teach Greek literature had been appealed to as an excuse for the edicts of Theodosius against the Pagans.

The invaders of the rights of conscience hypocritically professed to preserve the freedom of conscience, on the plea that they only removed obstacles from the progress of truth. Cruelty was made to bear the semblance of mercy by professing to be undertaken in the eternal interests of the persecuted![3] "Outside the Church is no salvation"—that was the first assertion, which was hopelessly falsified by the second, "There is no Church but mine"; and this was made a deadly proposition by the conclusion, "It is therefore your own interest (as well as mine!) that I should force you into (at least nominal) membership of the Church by tyrannising over your will and conscience; by making you accept my convictions as your convictions whether you hold them or no; and by reducing you into pauperism, driving you into exile, or putting you to death, if you refuse." Man has no immunity from erroneous opinions, and therefore it is not for man to arrogate to himself the infallibility of God or

[1] Jul. Firm. Maternus, *De errore prof. rel.* 29.

[2] Themistius, *ad Jovian.* 81; Julian, *Ep.* vii.; Liban. *Orat. Parent.*

[3] *Op. Imperf.* ii. 14: "Non *contra* vos precamur auxilium, sed pro vobis potius ut ab ausu sacrilego prohibeamini." "With shame and sorrow we hear from Augustine himself that fatal axiom which impiously arrayed cruelty in the garb of Christian charity."—Milman, *Lat. Christianity*, i. 127. It is an execrable sophism which it requires much charity ever to condone.

to anticipate His judgments.[1] Has it ever been worth while fo "the Church" to sprinkle her white robes with the blood of th innocent, and arm her gentle hand with the hellish implement of torture, in order to secure either a dead level of torpid ignor ance, or an empty assent, a hypocritical uniformity, a perjured and soul-destroying profession of beliefs, which the free con science is led by God's Spirit to reject? The blood of th martyrs whom "the Church" has slain cries against her fron the ground to God and man. The Donatists had more truth o their side when they quoted the words of Christ, "No man ca come unto me except the Father draw him." They argued tha "if Christ had loved his opponents in the same fashion tha

[1] The following earlier declarations of tolerance may be noted:—Tertullian "God has not hangmen for priests. Christ teaches us to bear wrong, not t revenge it." *Ad Scap.* 2: "Humani juris et naturalis potestatis est unicuiqu quod putaverit colere. . . . Nec religionis est cogere re religionem quae spont suscipi debet non vi." *Apol.* 24: "Videte ne hoc ad irreligiositatis elogium con currat, adimere libertatem religionis." Lactantius, *Div. Instt.* v. 19: "Non es opus vi et injuria quia religio cogi non potest; verbis potius quam verberibus re agenda est, ut sit voluntas. . . . Defendenda religio est non occidendo sed mori endo; non saevitia sed patientia; non scelere sed fide. Nam si sanguine, s tormentis, si malo religionem defendere velis, jam non defendetur illa, sed e polluetur atque violabitur. Nihil est enim tam voluntarium quam religio, in qu si animus sacrificantis aversus est, jam sublata, jam nulla est." Athanasius, *Son of Sol.* v. 2: "Satan, because there is no truth in him, breaks in with axe an sword. But the Saviour is gentle, and forces no one to whom He comes, bu knocks and speaks to the soul, 'Open to me, my sister.'" So too Hilary (c *Auxent.*) complains that the Church, once herself exiled and imprisoned, is no using the terrorism of exile and prison. Chrysostom, *Orat. in Babylam:* "Chris tians are not to destroy error by force and violence, but should work the salvatio of men by persuasion, instruction, and love"—Comp. *Hom.* xxix. and xlvi. *i Matt.* and *in Phocam Mart.* ἐμοὶ ἔθος ἐστὶ διώκεσθαι καὶ μὴ διώκειν. Sulpic Severus, *Hist. Sacr.* ii. 50: "Satis superque sufficere ut episcopali sententi haeretici judicati ecclesiis pellerentur mirum esse et inauditum nefas ut causa ecclesiae judex saeculi judicaret" (this was the view of Martin of Tours). Comp Ambr. *Ep.* xxiv. It was on the ground of the supposed success of the pena laws that Augustine changed his opinions for the worse, about 408. It is sadden ing to read his unconscious sophisms, such as, "We must not consider that one i compelled, but *what* that is to which he is compelled" (*Ep.* xciii. 16). The us of the syllogism of violence on the ground of Old Testament severities is enforce by Julius Firmicus Maternus "*et tous ces garçons-là.*" Augustine says of himself "Mea primitus sententia non erat nisi neminem ad unitatem Christiani esse cogen dum, *verbo* esse agendum, disputatione pugnandum, ratione vincendum, ne ficto catholicos haberemus, quos apertos haereticos noveramus. Sed haec opinio me non contradicentium verbis, sed demonstrantium superabatur exemplis." An again: "Non vincit nisi veritas, victoria veritatis est caritas" (see too *c. Ep Manich.* 2, 3). But in his *Retractations* he *withdraws* the opinion, "Non mih placere ullius saecularis potestatis impetu schismaticos ad communionem violente aretari," because the badness of the Donatists, and the improvement wrought i them by the "*diligentia disciplinae*" had convinced him!

Churchmen did, He would never have died for them," and that He had set an example to His followers, not how to slay their enemies, but how to suffer in their stead.

And when Augustine boasted that violence had succeeded, that many of the Donatists had been converted (strange conversion!) by the persecuting edicts of Honorius, he strangely deceived himself. He had made a wilderness, and he called it peace. To such a man it should have been no excuse that he was goaded into oppression by the obstinacy and crime of the party opposed to him; still less should he have been driven into extremes by his own logic radically vitiated by a false conception of the idea of the Church. The history of the North African Church, even as we learn it from his own pages, shows that persecution produced nothing but the sham conversion of some and the intensely maddened fanaticism of others. Party terrorism never produced sincere conversion. Prudentius admits that the penal edicts of Theodosius against Paganism had practically failed.[1] Augustine had as little right to glory in the Donatists who were frightened into nominal uniformity as Pagans had to boast of the apostates and renegades who gave up books or burnt incense in the Decian and Diocletian persecutions. The State has no power over religious belief. Caesar may enforce obedience to Caesar's laws; but to reckon heresy or schism among evil actions is to assume an infallibility which, as has been proved by numberless experiences, does not belong to any State or to any religious community. When Caesar seized the sword to enforce the Gospel, Augustine ought to have been the first to say to him, in the words of Christ, "Put up thy sword within the sheath." If the orthodox party had insisted on the civil suppression of all crimes against property and person; if they had firmly put down the Circumcellions, while at the same time they behaved to their brother-Christians with tolerance and charity, provoking them only to love and good works; if they had striven only with fair, strong, and kindly argument, urged in the spirit of Christian forbearance,—either the Donatist schism would have ceased to exist or its existence would have been a dwindling and a harmless one. As it was, these unfortunate

[1] "Inclitus ergo parens patriae, moderator et orbis,
Nil egit prohibendo vagas ne pristinus error
Crederet esse Deum nigrante sub aere formas."
Prudent. *ad Symmach.*

schismatics became a source of peril and destruction. Reduced to despair by persecution, the unhappy rigorists sided first with the Vandals, and then with the Arabs. Being oppressed, they found their deliverers in the barbarians. "These events," says Niebuhr, "should be a lesson to those who are determined not to see the misfortune which is the result of intolerance, or, as it deserves to be called, injustice."[1]

We conclude then that the Augustine who, in 397, assured the excellent Donatist bishop Fortunius at Tubursicium that he entirely disapproved of persecution, was a far wiser, if not a better, man than the Augustine who, in his later years, degraded the plea of mercy as an excuse for deeds of persecution, and became the purveyor of "nests of sophisms" to all who sought to secure religious peace by violence, and religious unity by sword and flame. But on this question we may appeal from the later to the earlier Augustine, who wisely wrote in his commentary on St. John's Gospel, "If we are *dragged* to Christ, we believe against our will; violence therefore is applied, the will is not kindled. A man may enter the church against his will, he may approach the altar against his will; he may receive the sacrament against his will: believe he cannot except with his will. If we believe with the body, we might believe against our will; but we do not believe with the body. Hear the Apostle '*with the heart* man believeth unto justification.' . . . Since he who is dragged seems to be compelled against his will, how do we solve the question 'No man cometh unto me except my Father draweth him'?"[2]

Unhappily, the Church took a downward course for many centuries in the matter of religious persecution. A century later persecution was in the ascendant, and later ages had learnt to witness it with impotent horror or ferocious joy.

[1] Niebuhr, *Lectures*, iii. 348 (E.T.)
[2] *In Joan. Ev. Tract.* xxvi. 2.

XVII

Continued

THE PELAGIAN CONTROVERSY

"Augustinus—*magnus opinator.*"—ERASMUS.

"The West bred fewer (heretical enquiries) a great deal, and those commonly of a lower nature, such as more nearly and directly concerned rather men than God; the Latins being always to capital heresies less inclined, yet unto gross superstition more."—HOOKER, *Eccl. Pol.* v. iii. 3.

SECTION XI

THE East had been convulsed by questions about the Godhead; the West was now to be agitated by a question about manhood. As the dogmatic definition of the Trinity and the twofold nature of Christ had been chiefly elaborated amid the theological struggles of Eastern councils, so now it was mainly left to the Fathers of the West to lay down the doctrinal limits of questions which bore on sin and grace.

The Manichean controversy turned on philosophical speculations; the Donatist on matters of Church order; the Pelagian on questions of religious dogma.[1] In all three controversies Augustine was actuated by a noble zeal, and rendered to the Church many memorable services. Yet those services were by no means unmixed with evil. The environment of controversy which led Augustine, as it led Jerome, to suspect heresy from afar, had a deleterious effect alike on his temper and on his theology. It cannot be said that he "improvised his convictions,"

[1] "The dispute with the Manicheans centred in the *metaphysical* question as to the nature of evil in the universe. . . . The dispute with Pelagius was chiefly concerned with the *psychological* question as to the nature of evil in the heart of man."—Cunningham, *St. Austin*, p. 81.

but he was sometimes dragged into exaggerations of them by the sophistic plausibility of his own remorseless logic. The Manichean controversy was the first which led him into the habit of attaching deeper importance to theoretic orthodoxy than to personal religion, and even those who revere him see the evil effect which it continued to exercise on his whole teaching.[1] The Donatist controversy launched him into intolerant conceptions of Church authority and dangerous misuse of the powers of the State. The Pelagian controversy ended in his producing a system of scholastic theology which tried to define the indefinable, introduced into Catholic doctrine a complete novelty, and was prolific of horrible inferences dishonouring to God and revolting to the conscience of mankind.[2] Happily his rigid theories seem to have exercised but little influence on his habitual teaching. In all his 400 sermons, and I know not how many homilies, the theory of reprobation is practically non-existent. He felt the danger of preaching predestination, and he always addresses his hearers as beloved of God, and designed for salvation.[3]

Pelagius, or Morgan, perhaps a monk of Bangor, was the son of poor parents, who early left his home and travelled southwards. He was a man of natural but self-taught genius. Of the personal details of his life we know but little. After a short stay at Rome he went to Constantinople, where he enjoyed the warm friendship and esteem of Chrysostom. He there became acquainted with the theology of Origen and of the Greek Fathers, which coincided with the natural bent of his own generous heart. When Chrysostom fell a victim to the infamous intrigues of the clergy, women, and eunuchs of his bad metropolitan city, Pelagius returned to Rome and was confirmed in his life of stern asceticism by what he saw of the corruption to which Jerome also bears witness as prevailing even among the clergy of the Western capital. In Rome

[1] Wordsworth, iv. 23.

[2] On the Pelagian controversy, see G. J. Voss, *Hist. de controversiis quas Pelagius ejusque reliquiae moverunt* (*Opp.* vol. vi.); Walch, *Ketzerhistorie*, iv. v.; Hooker, *On Predestination;* G. F. Wiggers, *Versuch einer pragmat. Darstellung des Augustinismus und Pelagianismus*, 2 vols. Hamb. 1821-33. It is a fact characteristic of the indifference of the East for anthropological controversies that neither Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, nor Evagrius takes the least notice of the Pelagian controversy.

[3] See *De Praedest. Sanctorum;* and Wordsworth, *Ch. Hist.* iv. 21.

he wrote the only works of his which have come down to us—a commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul, a letter to the virgin Demetrias, and a profession of faith addressed to Innocent the First. No one at Rome saw any heresy in his commentaries. Like Jerome, he enjoyed the friendship of many illustrious families, and trained many young persons in the paths of the ascetic life. Against the perfect innocence and purity of his conduct not even his enemies had a word of proof.[1] We may be sure that he was a thoroughly good man, for though Augustine and Jerome anathematised him as an heresiarch, Augustine calls him "a pre-eminent Christian," and his personal excellence is admitted even by so unscrupulous a controversialist as Jerome.

Perhaps the Pelagian controversy would never have risen at all if the views of Pelagius had not been pushed into extremes by his friend and follower Coelestius, whom Jerome, in his usual fashion, described as "stodged with Scotch porridge."[2] Pelagius, a man of calm temper, broad sympathies, and peaceful conscience, a clear thinker and an excellent exegete, had not the least sympathy with the prevalent delight in religious disputes. His heresy was in him hardly a heresy at all, for he approached it only on the practical side, and never pushed his dubious premisses into inferential extremes. He saw that many excused their vices on the plea of human weakness; and this seemed to him a dangerous error. Had it not been for Coelestius on one side and Augustine on the other, Pelagius, in spite of mistaken views, of which he certainly had no monopoly, might have died in the odour of sanctity and been regarded as one of the Fathers of the Church.[3] The errors in his extant writings are certainly not worse, and are far less dangerous, than those which might be culled from the pages of many a writer whom nevertheless the Church has honoured. But Coelestius was a man of a more restless and aggressive character. He carried his old instincts as an advocate into his new position as a monk and theologian. In 411, after a stay at Rome, in which they had won general approval, the two friends travelled to Sicily and Africa. They passed through Hippo, but failed to see Augustine, who was

[1] Jerome and Orosius, indeed, charge him with luxury, but Pelagius had lived in friendship with Paulinus of Nola and other saintly persons, and Augustine speaks of him personally with respect.

[2] "Scotorum pultibus praegravatus"—unless the words apply to Pelagius.

[3] His commentaries on St. Paul were printed by mistake among the works of his enemy Jerome. His specific opinions are there only discussed *ab extra*.

engaged in crushing the Donatists at Carthage, where Pelagius met him once or twice, and they interchanged friendly letters. Pelagius travelled to Palestine. Coelestius unfortunately became a presbyter at Carthage. At first the pure life and many gifts of Coelestius secured him much favour, but the next year Paulinus of Milan, the biographer of Ambrose, warned the Bishop Aurelius that he was teaching error, and quoted from his writings seven distinct or inferential propositions which he declared to be heretical;—as, 1, that Adam would have died even if he had not sinned. 2. His fall affected himself alone. 3. New-born children are in the same position as Adam. 4. Mankind neither dies through Adam's death nor is raised by Christ's resurrection. 5. Children, even if they die unbaptized, have eternal life. 6. The Law as well as the Gospel can lead to holiness. 7. Even before Christ came there were men without sin. On "original sin," Coelestius had nothing to say. He regarded it as a mere scholastic enquiry, depending for solution on the open question between *creationists*, who thought that each soul was a fresh creation, and *traducianists*, who thought that souls were derived *ex traduce* from the parents. As for infant baptism, Coelestius said that he regarded it as a duty, though he hardly explained why. A council was summoned, and leaving other questions on one side they anathematised the seven propositions, and expelled Coelestius, who went to Ephesus, and there continued his work as a presbyter.

Augustine, though absent from this council, approved its decisions, and shortly afterwards, at the request of Marcellinus, explained the doctrine of original sin in his three books *On the Punishment and Forgiveness of Sins*,[1] and further in a book *On the Spirit and the Letter*. Yet he says nothing of man's incapability of good, and makes allowance for the freedom of man as well as for the grace of God. Both of these Pelagius always professed to recognise, though he seems to have confined "grace" to the influence of the ordinary means of grace, and certainly did not

[1] It is noteworthy that Augustine held a view which has been ignorantly regarded in modern times as heretical, namely, that *not all punishment beyond the grave is necessarily endless*. After saying that some believed in "temporary punishments" only in this life, and others in the period between death and the final judgment, he adds, "*Non autem omnes veniunt in sempiternas poenas*, quae post illud judicium sunt futurae, *qui post mortem sentiunt temporales*" (*De Civ. Dei*, xxi. 13). This obviously implies an intermediate state, and a sort of purgatory.

go so far as to regard it as "a sort of fourth person of the blessed Trinity." [1]

Meanwhile Pelagius in Palestine had enjoyed friendly intercourse both with Jerome and John of Jerusalem, though he was much more closely drawn to John than to the narrow and jealous theology of Jerome. Jerome at once began to discover the real or imaginary taint of Origenism in the opinions of Pelagius. A noble young Roman lady named Demetrias had taken the vows of a nun, and Pelagius as well as Augustine wrote, at the request of her mother, to congratulate her. This letter stirred up the whole controversy. Pelagius began it with a eulogy on the loftiness of human nature, and an argument against extravagant assertions of "total corruption of the will." There had been, he said, virtuous men before the Advent, and since then it had been easier to live a holy life. Men and women could live holy lives in any condition, so that virginity, though honourable, was not to be overvalued. Much of this was true and wise, and Pelagius showed a higher wisdom than either Jerome or Augustine when, though himself an ascetic, he refused to be swept away by the current opinions on the subject of celibacy, and resisted the Manichean error by which those opinions were deeply though unconsciously affected.[2]

In 415 there came to Palestine a young and fiery Spanish presbyter named Paulus Orosius, the author of the well-known history, an uncompromising champion of orthodoxy and a zealous admirer of Augustine. He was scandalised that a man against whom Augustine had written should be living in high repute at Jerusalem, and still more by the disdainful question of Pelagius "And what is Augustine to me?" He attacked Pelagius before a synod of the assembled clergy of Jerusalem, but further discus-

[1] Unfortunately the one Latin word *gratia* was used to render the two Greek words χάρις "favour" and χάρισμα "a spiritual gift," and this led to some confusion; but Pelagius used "grace" in a very vague and subordinate way, and he had as little conception of that absolute spiritual union with Christ on which St. Paul so greatly dwells (ἐν Χριστῷ) as he had of the race as dying in Adam. But if Pelagius almost did away with grace, Augustine, in spite of his asseverations, almost did away with free-will. See Wiggers, i. 136; Neander, iv. 291.

[2] Fulgentius (*De Fide*), going further than even Augustine, hesitates not to write that unbaptized infants "*ignis aeterni sempiterno supplicio puniendos*," and this revolting doctrine was defended by the nonsense that this is just because God foresaw what they *would* have done had they lived! Augustine is content with their *levissima damnatio*, and his decision that their eternity is *extra regnum Dei* led to the mediaeval notion of the limbo of infants. He says, "Quo *non* eant scio, quo eant nescio."

sion was at the time impossible. Bishop John could not understand Latin and Orosius could not understand Greek, and, with the exception of an untrustworthy interpreter, Pelagius alone was familiar with both languages. Since, however, the question had been first raised in the Latin Church, it was left to the examination of Innocent at Rome.

Eager, however, to secure a condemnation of these opinions in the East as well as in Africa, the opponents of Pelagius induced Eulogius of Caesarea, the Metropolitan of Palestine, to summon a synod, at which two Gallic bishops, Heros of Arles and Lazarus of Aix, were to accuse Pelagius of heresy.[1] The synod of fourteen bishops met at Diospolis (Lydda) in 415, but neither Orosius nor the two Western bishops appeared. Pelagius refused to be held responsible for anything which was not in his own writings; he maintained that in asserting the possibility he had never asserted the *reality* of a sinless life; that in arguing for the free-will of man he never excluded the grace of God; and that he was in entire accordance with all the recognised doctrines of the Catholic Church. He declined to answer for the opinions of Coelestius; declared that he did not hold the views attributed to that presbyter; and on being asked to anathematise the holders of certain errors, said that he was perfectly willing to do so if he might anathematise them, not as heretics, but as fools.[2] The bishops were satisfied and Pelagius was acquitted. Unfortunately many admirers of Pelagius vented their indignation for the splenetic sarcasms of Jerome against the "miserable synod" by a most unjustifiable attack upon the monastery at Bethlehem. This did not improve his already embittered feelings towards "Catiline," as he chose to nickname the new heresiarch.

Orosius hurried back to Augustine, who once more seized his pen to maintain the total depravity of human nature in his works *On Nature*, *On Nature and Grace*, and *On the Perfection of Human Righteousness*. In these works he is as extreme on his own side as Coelestius, if not Pelagius, had been on the other. Two new councils were summoned to condemn Pelagius at Carthage and Mileum, and the acts of these councils, together with a confidential letter from Augustine and his friends, were sent to Pope

[1] It is not known why they were in Palestine. Pope Zosimus speaks unfavourably of them, and says that he had deposed them for irregular election. *Ep.* ii. 4 (*ad Africanos Episcopos*, Mansi, iv. 350-353).

[2] Aug. *De Gest. Pelag.* 30.

Innocent. Pelagius also wrote to Innocent, asserting that he had never denied the necessity of grace or the duty of infant baptism. He sent a confession of his faith and charged his opponents with Manichean and Jovinian errors, since their doctrines implied that some men could not possibly help sinning, and others, being predestined to eternal life, could not really sin at all. Innocent, delighted that he should be appealed to, promptly used his apostolic infallibility to excommunicate Pelagius, Coelestius, and all their followers.

Augustine, on receiving the Acts of the Synod of Diospolis, wrote his books *On the dealings with Pelagius*, and a letter to Paulinus of Nola, which is of extreme importance, as containing the first formulation of the theory of predestination, into which he had been gradually dragged by the course of the controversy, and which he founded almost exclusively on incidental expressions in the Epistle to the Romans.[1] Pelagius wrote once more to defend what he really held, and repudiate what he did not hold. Coelestius hastened to Rome, where Innocent had been succeeded by Zosimus. Zosimus, who, being a Greek, had but little taste for these questions, accepted the favourable view of their opinions, and held with them that "original sin" was not a recognised doctrine of the Church, and that other points at issue were mere school problems. Looking at the question simply on its practical side, he wrote to reprove the African bishops for their excessive zeal in heresy-hunting, for their uncharitable haste in condemnation, and for the vain curiosity of systematising refinement, which led them to be wise above what is written. He finally told them to submit to the authority of the see of Rome.[2] This they were quite ready to do when the Pope agreed with them, but when he differed from them it was an altogether different matter. Failing with the Pope they secured the Emperor, and having found from the Donatist controversy how effective is the syllogism of violence, they at once

[1] *Ep.* clxxxvi. It is in the joint names of Augustine and Alypius. Augustine, being but partially acquainted with Greek, and relying on the Latin version, supposed that ἐφ' ᾧ in Rom. v. 12, meant "*in whom*," whereas Pelagius rightly translated it "for as much as" (*in eo quod*), and Julian of Eclanum by *propter quod*; yet of course he was right in refuting the "vain talk of the Pelagians, that 'original sin' consisted only 'in the *following* of Adam.'"

[2] See the letters of Zosimus in Mansi (l. c.), and Labbe's *Concilia*, iii. 401-403. He says that the Romans could scarcely refrain from weeping at the condemnation of men who spoke so often of the "grace of God," and the "divine assistance."

obtained from Honorius at Ravenna a *sacrum rescriptum*, which banished Pelagius and Coelestius out of the Empire, and threatened their followers with confiscation and exile.[1] Another African council of 200 bishops, in 418, anathematised the views of Pelagius. Thereupon Zosimus, in sudden alarm, turned completely round, and declared strongly against Pelagius in an *epistola tractoria*. Eighteen bishops of Italy, and with them the able and excellent Julian of Eclanum,[2] refused to accept the new decision, and were driven into exile. All Pelagians and all who supported them were punished, and Pelagianism as an external heresy was effectually crushed. Of Pelagius and Coelestius we know no more; they died in obscurity and neglect. Julian alone maintained the controversy, in which the happiness of his life was shipwrecked. He was powerless to withstand the twofold force of the imperial authority and the passions of the mob to which Augustine had equally appealed, and to which the trimming Pope had instantly yielded. "Why," he indignantly asks Augustine, "did you hire the populace, and stir up factions at Rome? Why, out of the revenues of the poor, did you fatten troops of horses through almost all Africa? Why, with the legacies of matrons, did you corrupt the powers of the world, that the straw of popular fury might blaze against us? Why did you scatter the peace of the Church? Why did you befleck the age of a religious Emperor with the impiousness of persecution?" To these invectives there was no satisfactory reply, but the arguments of the pious and brilliant Bishop of Eclanum were so keen and strong that Augustine was obliged in 421 to write a careful answer to them in six books. To this Julian again replied, and Augustine had to consider his refutation so carefully that it remained unfinished even at his death. Julian argued that if every nature was hopelessly tainted with original sin, marriage became a crime; that if there be no real free-will there can be no real responsibility, and therefore no sin and no virtue; that the condemnation of a whole innocent race to total corruption for the sin of one parent was contradictory to reason, to Scripture, and to the mercy of God, since it was said in Deuteronomy that each man should suffer for his own sins and not for those

[1] This was probably effected by Augustine's influence with Count Valerian, and it was said that in order to secure this interference of the secular power to control theological opinions, bribery was freely used.

[2] His marriage with Ia was "graced by an *epithalamium* from the pen of Paulinus of Nola," *Poema*, 25.

of his parents; that if expressions of an opposite import were insisted on there was no heresy which could not be maintained by scraps of Scripture, and that higher than Scripture stood a pure conception of the righteousness of God. What would God be if, without either justice or mercy, He punished those whom He had created for evil, and because He had Himself created them of the race of Adam? With these and many such considerations he confronted the pessimism of Augustine, which he perhaps rightly regarded as the result of indelible impressions received by the Bishop of Hippo in his Manichean youth.[1] But it was useless to argue. Driven from Cilicia, driven from Constantinople, Julian died at last at the age of fifty, in the deepest poverty and distress, a noble victim to theological intolerance.

Augustine poured forth book after book against the Pelagians, and grew harder and harder both in his expressions and his views as time went on.[2] In his earlier books, up to 415 he had forborne to mention Pelagius by name, and spoke respectfully both of him and of Coelestius; but, later on, the Pelagians became "liars, empty wind-bags filled with their own pride and self-righteousness, not belonging to the Church at all, and scarcely worth a refutation." To all the unanswerable appeals against holding ignoble views of God's character he has nothing to reply but the exclamation, "How unsearchable are thy judgments, and thy ways past finding out!"[3] And after all, though he was engaged in this controversy from 411 to the end of his life, he only won a partial victory. In the Church Pelagianism vanished, but Augustinianism did not prevail. Vincent of Lerins, disapproving of this new scholasticism which laid down such

[1] A charge which he vainly attempts to deny.

[2] His anti-Pelagian treatises fill 1400 folio columns of the 16th vol. in the Benedictine edition of his works. "His was the error of those who follow without due consideration the strong first impression which the human mind entertains that there must be some definite truth to be arrived at on the question. If revelation as a whole does not speak explicitly, revelation does not intend to do so; and to impose a definite truth upon it when it designedly stops short of one is as real an error of interpretation as to deny a truth which it expresses."—Canon Mozley, *On the August. Doctr. of Predestination.*

[3] Augustine argued (*Ep.* ccxvii. *ad Vital.* 19-22 and *passim*) that Divine grace is not given to all men, which he attempts to prove by the fact that many children die unbaptized! He says that the text, "God will have all men to be saved" (1 Tim. ii. 4), *must* be misunderstood, since there are so many men who remain unsaved, not because they refuse to be saved, "*but because God wills not that they should.*" He tries to twist "*all men*" into "*men of all kinds.*"

dictatorial definitions about insoluble decrees, invented his famous "*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus,*" to show that Augustine's theories of predestination were not Catholic doctrines.[1] The Church in general rejects the dogmatic Manichean assertion that mankind is split by an iron necessity into two hard antagonistic masses, and that all except a few elect are predestined to endless torments. The monks of Adrumetum thought that Augustine's views would promote on the one side secure indifference, and on the other Antinomian desperation. Cassian, the great master of Western monasticism, disapproved of the exaggeration and one-sidedness of Augustine in one direction, and of Coelestius in the other, and Augustine wrote his *On the Gift of Perseverance* in 425, to combat this Semi-Pelagianism which refuses to accept the "horrible decrees" of a scholastic philosophy. In this book he sees the harshness and difficulty of his own views, but says that he cannot help this, because they are the word of God. Happily the divinely-implanted instincts and inwardly-illuminated reason of "the natural man" sometimes help to correct and soften the ruthless inference of "the unnatural theologian."[2]

When we consider the excellence of Pelagius as a commentator, and his holiness as a man, we may freely acknowledge that in questions as yet undecided he unduly pressed the power of free-will, and made too little allowance for constraining grace, and yet may be permitted to think that harsh measure has been dealt to him when he is regarded solely as a pestilent heresiarch. His own explanations of what he meant, and modifications of what he said, were scornfully rejected, as well as his repeated declarations that he had always been, and always desired to be, in the orthodox communion of the Catholic Church. Had there

[1] Hooker, *On Predestination*. "The publication of these things, *never before descended into*, troubled exceedingly the minds of many." Bishop Wordsworth, *Ch. Hist.* iv. 28. "He had boldly ventured into a new province of theology, and he had penetrated almost alone into intricate questions never exposed before." Jansen had read Augustine's works twenty times, and was convinced that his *Augustinus* (1640) correctly expressed the views of the Father. Yet Innocent X. condemned the first four of the propositions gathered from the *Augustinus* as heretical, and the fifth (that Jesus Christ had not died for *all*) as rash, impious, and injurious to God.

[2] The Semi-Pelagianism, which owed much of its strength to the opinions of Cassian, was condemned in the Synod of Valence, 436. Augustine always spoke of the Semi-Pelagianism of Southern Gaul with courtesy and respect. See *Epp.* ccxxv. vi., *De Praed.* sec. 2.

been less of fervid heresy-hunting, less of passionate misrepresentation, more of lenient construction and Christian charity, he might have survived the misfortune of conflicting with the Western theologians, after having been trained in the larger views of the East. This much at least is certain: he was perfectly sincere.

Both Pelagius and Augustine appealed to Scripture, and if they brought to Scripture opinions already made, yet each could refer to passages which lent apparent sanction to his own views. Augustine had been specially convinced of the final truth of his theory by the Epistle to the Romans, and especially by Rom. v. and ix. When he argued in favour of irresistible grace, and absolute predestination, and arbitrary election, he could not but come into sophistic collision with such passages as 1 Tim. ii. 4, and Heb. x. 26, 27. If he had studied St. Paul in the original Greek, "it is probable," says Bishop Wordsworth, "that his opinions on predestination, election, and reprobation would have been different from what they were."[1] Pelagius could, on the other hand, claim that the reasonings of St. Paul could not be so interpreted as to overthrow much that seemed to him to be contained both explicitly and implicitly in the simple teaching of the Synoptic Gospels.

Again, both of them appealed to the authority of previous Church writers, and here also they might equally claim as many sentences and expressions on the one side as on the other. In point of fact, the truth lay midway between them both, and the earlier Fathers, if they had not been Pelagians, certainly also had not been Augustinians. There were sentences on grace and sentences on free-will in their writings, which, taken alone, might be quoted in favour of either controversialist. Nay, more, Pelagius, if he vehemently opposed the notion of helpless passivity implied by Augustine's famous phrase in the *Confessions*, "Give me what thou biddest, and bid what thou wilt," was yet able to quote from the earlier writings of Augustine himself many expressions which, apart from the plausibility of those ingenious glosses which can make anything mean anything, were

[1] For instance, he would not have rendered ἐφ' ᾧ in Rom. v. 12 by *in illo*. He explained "God willeth all men to be saved" by "Omnes qui salvi fiunt nisi ipso volente non fiunt"—a most sophistical equivalent! and (*De corrept. et Grat.* 42) explains away free-will by saying that the will is only free when it is under the absolute dominion of Divine grace! See Wordsworth, *Ch. Hist.* iv. 18.

in exact accordance with his own views. Unquestionably Augustine before 379 was himself a Semi-Pelagian.[1] If we take his own words in their plain and obvious sense, he had changed his standpoint; and a writer so progressive and so prolific had need of many reconsiderations of his published views, which attributed sin to the inherent evil of matter. In arguing against the Manichees, he had insisted strongly on free-will as the origin of sin. It was only when the Pelagians saw too exclusively in free-will the source of good as well as of evil that he insisted too exclusively on the irresistible grace of God. And he then ran into the peril of degrading free-will into an impotence of wicked tendency wholly dependent on a grace predetermined by eternal election.

And whatever may have been the rashness and unwisdom of Coelestius, he maintained with truth that his errors, if errors they were, only affected matters of opinion—matters on which no Church had as yet delivered a formal decision, so that even if he were mistaken he could not be heretical. The Greek Church has always leaned to Semi-Pelagian views, and was indifferent to the entire controversy. Pelagianism was indeed condemned in the Council of Ephesus, 431, but in the East the question was but little discussed, though Theodore of Mopsuestia in 419 wrote against the views of Jerome.[2] "The English Church," says Dr. Neale, "has from its earliest infancy evinced a tendency to Pelagianism."[3]

And surely the world has learnt by this time that while there is in this matter no practical difficulty—that while to all intents and purposes man is practically free to refuse the evil and to choose the good, since the grace of God by which this can be done is always and freely accorded to all alike—yet in the theory of the question there lies an insoluble antinomy; it ends, like every other question, in a mystery which transcends the feeble capacities of man to understand.

The two disputants were wholly unlike each other. Pelagius, whether he was or not (as some said) physically exempt from

[1] Jerome, too, whose *Dialogus c. Pelagianos* Augustine praises, is hardly more than Semi-Pelagian.

[2] Only fragments of Theodore's book remain. Phot. *Cod.* 177; Marius Mercator's translation (Jerome, ed. Vallarsi, ii. 807-814). It was called *πρὸς τοὺς λέγοντας φύσει καὶ οὐ γνώμῃ πταίειν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, λόγοι πεντε.*

[3] *Holy Eastern Church*, i. 37.

sensual temptation, was a man of northern temperament, a severe logician, a clear, calm, consequent, unimaginative thinker, who had lived from childhood upwards the peaceful life of a monk and an ascetic. Augustine, on the other hand, had lived in thunderstorms; he had been a sensualist, a doubter, a Manichee, a rhetorician, an Academic, a man in whose veins ran the hot blood of Africa, and whose whole life had been spent in wild struggles against himself and against his enemies. The Hamartiology of Pelagius could hardly fail to misunderstand the Hamartiology formed in the burning fiery furnace of Augustine's temptations. There was enough, then, in the dispositions and past experience of the two men to account for wide divergencies in their conceptions of life and of all its moral and spiritual problems; but besides this they approached the question from wholly different points of view—Pelagius from the side of morals and practice, Augustine from the side of dialectics and of philosophical speculation.[1] And the extremes of both were dangerous. Pelagianism might make a man unspiritual; Augustinianism might produce a fanatic and a fatalist. Augustine fearlessly rushed forward, or was driven by his antagonists, sometimes changing his opinions as he advanced.[2] Partly from the reasonings of a new religious philosophy, partly by general inferences from limited phrases in the sacred writings, he framed a complete, and, as far as its own consistency went, a harmonious system. But it was the inevitable tendency of this system to give an overpowering importance to "problems on which Christianity, wisely measuring, it would seem, the capacity of the human mind, had declined to utter any final or authoritative decree."[3] He insisted on the acceptance of dictatorial axioms on some of the most mysterious problems which can cross the horizon of human thought, and did his best to identify Christian orthodoxy with inferential logic and vague speculation. Yet there is

[1] On the whole subject, see especially Vossii *Historia Pelagiana*. I have been much indebted to the lucid and able sketch of these controversies in Böhringer, *Die Alte Kirche*, xi. xii.

[2] Thus, "at first," as Hooker says, he attributed predestination to God's foresight of merits, but this he afterwards retracted (*Retractt.* i. 23; *De Praedest. Sanct.* 3) for the view that all mankind was polluted and accursed, and God, electing some, abandoned the rest to perdition merely by His own wish (*De Bapt. et Grat.* 5; *c. Julian.* v. 6). It is impossible not to contrast this cruel and wretched view with the larger and nobler conceptions of Clement and the school of Alexandria.

[3] Milman, *Hist. of Christianity*, iii. 173.

one feature of his writings which redounds absolutely to his credit. Dialectical, severe, peremptory, dogmatic, as is his tone, he scarcely ever sinks, as Jerome so often does, and as religious partisans do so frequently, into the abusive rancour of personal hostility.

XVII

Continued

CLOSING EVENTS IN AUGUSTINE'S EPISCOPATE

"Deus semper idem, noverim me, noverim te!"—*Solil.* ii. 4.

SECTION XII

It was necessary to dwell at some length on these three great controversies, because they occupied almost all the years of Augustine's episcopal life. Yet such was his incomparable versatility, energy, and diligence, that, among the many books which he poured forth on these subjects, he still had time to produce other works of more enduring greatness, while he neither neglected his wide correspondence nor his multitudinous duties as a bishop and pastor of his special flock. He was at one and the same moment the greatest preacher, the greatest writer, the greatest theologian, the greatest bishop, and the most commanding personality in the Churches of the West, while he was constantly preaching simple sermons and performing simple duties among the poor artisans and fishermen of Hippo.

His personal life was chequered, like that of all men, with joys and sorrows. Men of a nature like his are always deeply beloved and intensely hated. But if he had many bitter opponents among Manichees, Donatists, and Pelagians—if books full of violent invective were published against him by Petilianus and Julian—on the other hand he enjoyed the passionate admiration of men like Orosius; the warm, unvarying friendship of beautiful souls like Alypius; Evodius, Bishop of Uzala; his future biographer Possidius, Bishop of Calama; and Severus, Bishop of Mileum, "his second soul," "his other I." With

Paulinus of Nola, whom he never saw, he maintained a delightful correspondence, and his fine spirit of humility and gentleness calmed the tumultuous jealousy of Jerome, and turned a possible enemy into an appreciative friend. With the Bishops of Rome, except Zosimus, he was in kindly relations, and though he had a theoretic respect for the decision of the see of St. Peter, he maintained as strongly as Cyprian and as Hincmar the independence of national Churches. In 419 he induced an African council to protest against the pride as well as against the unwarranted interferences of the Bishop of Rome. We have seen already that terrible troubles arose even in the little circle of his monks and clergy. The duplicity of his presbyter Januarius, who practically retained his property while professing to have abandoned it, caused him a severe pang. The unworthiness of the youthful Antonius, whom he had trained from boyhood and recommended for the bishopric of Fussala, almost induced him to emphasise his regretful sorrow by resigning his own see. The grave scandal caused by the mutual accusations of Spes and Bonifacius filled him with shame and anguish. These and other similar circumstances might have served as a warning that it was a hopeless attempt to enforce on all his clergy the monastic regulations of poverty, celibacy, and asceticism, which formed his own lofty ideal of a Christian life.[1]

Augustine was a believer in dreams, prodigies, portents, miracles, the efficacy of relics, and the intercession of martyrs. In one of his sermons he details prodigies which had occurred at Jerusalem. In his *City of God*, and one of his sermons, he tells a curious story.

A relic-monger had brought from Palestine some bones, which were asserted to be those of the martyr St. Stephen. They

[1] I have already referred to Lea's *Clerical Celibacy* for an absolutely overwhelming mass of evidence on the undesirability of enforced clerical celibacy and the inevitable abuses of the monastic system. It is enough to refer to such books as Giraldus Cambrensis, *Gemma Ecclesiae* (Brewer's ed. iii. xlii. *seqq.*) He says: "Nunquam, hostis ille antiquus in aliquo articulo adeo Ecclesiam Dei circumvenit sicut in voti illius admissione." Even a Pope—Pius II. (Æneas Sylvius)—says: "Non erravit Ecclesia primitiva quae sacerdotibus permisit uxores," *Ep.* cxxx. For terrible mediaeval evidence, see the works of St. Peter Damiani, and especially one horrible book. Even the Fathers furnish the strongest proofs of the danger of the theory that a beneficent God created a species which could only prolong its temporal existence by forfeiting or impairing its promised eternity. See Cypr. *Ep.* iv., and *De Hab. Virginum, passim;* Tert. *De Virg. vel.* xv.; Lact. *Div. Instt.* vi.; *Conc. Antioch* (Harduin, i. 198); Niceph. *H. E.* xiv. 50.

were consigned to a chapel in the church at Hippo, on which Augustine placed an inscription of four verses to tell the people of all the miracles which God had permitted to be wrought by these bones, at the reception of which he pronounced a solemn discourse. In this sermon he mentions "only" three dead persons by name who were recalled to life in the first two years after the arrival of the relics, but he specially narrates the miraculous recovery of Paulus and Palladia.[1] In the Cappadocian Caesarea there was a well-known family consisting of a father and mother, seven sons, and three daughters, of whom Paulus was the sixth and Palladia the seventh. Very shortly after the father's death all the sons were at home, and the eldest so brutally forgot himself as to violently abuse and even beat his widowed mother, while not one of her other sons interfered for her protection. In a tumult of fury the unhappy woman hastened to the baptismal font at cock-crow to curse her eldest son.[2] There a demon, in the form of her husband's brother, met her, and asking where she was going, heard her story, and persuaded her to curse all her children alike. "Inflamed with his viperous counsel, she prostrated herself at the font, and with dishevelled locks and bared bosom she entreated God with all her might that we might all be banished from our country, and going through all lands might terrify the whole race of men by our example." God heard in anger the evil prayer. During his sleep the eldest son was seized with a tremulous palsy; then within the year all the other brothers and sisters in succession were smitten with the same disease. The wretched mother, cursed by the full granting of her prayer, hanged herself. The horror-stricken children, ashamed to meet their fellow-citizens, wandered all over the Roman Empire, making their misery a spectacle to all. The second brother was cured by the relics of St. Lawrence at Ravenna. Paulus and Palladia went about visiting all places where miracles were performed, and became celebrated for their misery.[3] Among other places where St. Stephen performed miracles, they visited Ancona in Italy, and Uzala in Africa; but in vain. Then on Jan. 1, 426, Paulus saw a vision. "A person bright to look upon, and venerable with white hair, told me that I should be cured in three months, and your Holiness" (he is addressing Augustine)

[1] *De Civ. Dei*, xxii. 8, 20-22.

[2] Paulus himself relates the story in his *Libellus Curationis*. Aug. *Serm.* cccxxii.

[3] *De Civ. Dei*, xxii. 8; *Serm.* cccxxiii.

"appeared also to my sister in a vision exactly as we now see you, which signified to us that we were to come to Hippo. I too, as we passed through other cities, frequently saw your Beatitude in dreams, just as I see you now.[1] Admonished therefore by Divine authority, we came to this city about fifteen days ago." During this fortnight the brother and sister had frequently visited the church, and especially the memorial chapel to St. Stephen, which had been built by the deacon Heraclius, imploring God with tears to pardon their sin and restore their health. Their case had become notorious, and at Hippo they were the observed of all observers. On Easter Sunday the youth, while praying in the presence of a crowded congregation at the screen of the memorial chapel, suddenly sank in a swoon, but without the tremor which usually marked his sleep. In a short time he awoke perfectly healed before them all. A number of persons one after another burst into the vestry to narrate the miracle to Augustine, and at last Paulus with a crowd of followers. He fell at the knees of Augustine, who raised him up and kissed him. The church resounded with praises, and when silence was restored the lessons were read, and Augustine preached a short but joyous sermon, wishing the people to hear as it were only "the eloquence of God."[2] Fatigued with toils and fasting, he says that he could not have even delivered that very brief address without the help of the prayers of St. Stephen, for as Possidius tells us, he had been baptizing such a multitude as would have wearied five bishops instead of one. He took Paulus home to dine with him, and requested him to put the whole story into writing. Some days after he placed Paulus on the steps of the pulpit with himself, and Palladia, who had not yet been healed. All the congregation could see the one perfectly cured, the other still trembling. The story of Paulus was read aloud, and it ended with a request to the people to thank God for him, and to pray for his sister. They descended from the pulpit, and Palladia went to pray before the memorial chapel. Then Augustine preached on the subject, and told the people not to honour *him*, because he had appeared to them in dreams

[1] Augustine, not unnaturally, was seen in dreams by various persons, and always speaks as if it were *really himself* who came to them, though he was unconscious of it. When he first returned to Africa the grammarian Eulogius, who had been his pupil, told him that he, while he was at Milan, had come to him in a dream, and explained a difficult passage of Cicero.—*De Rhetorica; De curâ pro mort. ger.* 13.

[2] *Serm.* cccxx.

without his own consciousness. "Who am I? I am a mere man, one of many, not one of the great." While proceeding to speak of the miracles wrought in honour of St. Stephen at Ancona and Uzala, he was again interrupted by shouts, "Thanks to God! Praise to Christ!" For Palladia had hardly knelt before the screen of St. Stephen's chapel than she too had sunk into a sleep and had risen healed, and was now led to the pulpit once more. For some time the emotion of the weeping congregation was intense, and Augustine could only add very few words. Do not these exciting scenes read as if they had occurred but yesterday at Lourdes or La Salette?

Shortly before his death Augustine narrated another miracle to Alypius.[1] A certain Dioscorus had a daughter who became dangerously ill, and though he had been a scoffer against Christianity, he vowed to Christ that if she recovered he would become a Christian. She recovered, and he hardened his heart. He was struck with sudden blindness, and confessing his sin, promised, if his sight was restored, that he would fulfil his vow. His sight was restored, and again his heart was hardened. He was indeed received into the faith, but pretended that he could not learn the creed by heart. He was then stricken with complete paralysis, and being unable to speak, was admonished by a dream to write down a confession that this had happened to him because of his crime. After this written confession the use of all his limbs was restored, but not his power of speech; he then wrote down again that he really had the creed by heart, and still remembered it. Having thus confessed, he was finally restored.

Nay, more, Augustine himself worked miracles. When he lay ill in bed, says Possidius, a person came to him with a sick man, on whom he asked him to lay his hand and heal him. Augustine answered that if he had possessed such power he would have exercised it before. "But," replied the man, "I was bidden to do this in a dream, in which some one said to me, 'Go to Bishop Augustine, that he may lay hands on your sick friend, and he will be healed.'" Augustine no longer hesitated, and the man went away healed.[2] This is the only miracle directly attributed to St. Augustine. It must be classed with similar incidents and similar testimonies in all ages, even

[1] *Ep.* ccxxvii. [2] Possid. *Vit. Aug.* 29.

down to our own. Possidius adds that, both as a presbyter and as a bishop, Augustine had often been requested to pray for persons possessed with the devil, and that when he had supplicated God with tears the demons had gone out of them.

The multiplication of these miraculous stories is one of the many proofs of the deepening superstition of the age. The miracles performed by fourth-century saints and bishops, or by the supposed bones of martyrs, in their age, stand exactly on the same level as those of the Port Royalists, or those of Edward Irving, or those wrought at the exhibitions of the Holy Coat of Trèves.

One circumstance which overwhelmed Augustine with grief was the judicial murder of his highly-esteemed friend Marcellinus, who, as Imperial Commissioner, had presided over the anti-Donatist conference at Carthage. When Heraclianus, the Count of Africa, had revolted from the Emperor, and sailed with a fleet of 3000 ships to besiege Rome, he had been routed by Marinus, and afterwards executed. Marinus returned to Africa to trample out the last sparks of the rebellion, and he arrested Marcellinus and his brother, who were perfectly innocent, on the charge of having been accomplices in the rebellion. It is said that he was bribed to take this step by the Donatists, who could not forgive Marcellinus for the hostile decision which he had given at the conference.[1] However that may be, the friends of the Church, knowing the piety of Marcellinus, and grateful for the many services which he had rendered, used every exertion in his favour. Augustine wrote an earnest letter to Caecilianus, an intimate friend of Count Marinus, entreating him to use his influence to secure the liberation of the two prisoners. Caecilianus believed that he had succeeded, and Augustine began to breathe more freely. One day he visited the prisoners. The brother of Marcellinus had said to the Count, "If I am imprisoned as a punishment of my sins, how is it that you, who are so true a Christian, have been brought into the same calamity?" "Even supposing your kind testimony were true," answered Marcellinus, "is it not a Divine boon that my sins should be punished on earth, and perhaps even by my blood, and not reserved for future judgment?" Augustine, thinking that perhaps Marcellinus may have fallen in his youth into sins of impurity, affectionately urged him to penitence, if such had been

[1] Jer. *Dial. c. Pelag.* 3; Orosius, *Hist.* vii. 42.

the case. But Marcellinus, with a grave and modest smile, took Augustine's right hand in both of his, and said, "I call to witness the sacraments which this hand administers, that I have never been guilty of such sin either before or after my marriage."[1] Marinus, however, had determined that the brothers should die, and, anticipating that the Church would interfere on behalf of Marcellinus, as she had once done on his own, he had them led out to an unusual spot on the eve of St. Cyprian's Day, and there they were executed. He pretended a necessary obedience to the Emperor's command, but this was false. He was immediately recalled from Africa, and deprived of all his dignities. Augustine overwhelmed with grief, immediately left Carthage, and Marcellinus received the honours of a martyr.[2]

At a later period of his life another incident occurred which was a source of deep grief to Augustine. Seeing the disturbed and perilous condition of Rome before its capture by the Goths, the elder Melania had left it with her family. Like "a Christian Sibyl," Apocalypse in hand, she prophesied the coming destruction of the city. Her daughter-in-law, Albina, and Pinianus, who was married to her granddaughter the younger Melania, accompanied her in her flight. By incessant appeals and objurgations she had succeeded in inducing them to sell most of their goods, and to devote their lives to God. They were persons of the highest nobility and of great wealth.

The history of the family was briefly this, as we find it in the letters of Jerome and the *Historia Lausiaca* of Palladius.[3] The elder Melania, adopting from Jerome and other teachers the extravagant views which regarded a rupture of every public and domestic tie as a necessary part of holiness, had abandoned her young son Publicola to the care of the public praetor, and established herself in a convent on the Mount of Olives. Under the spiritual direction of Rufinus, Publicola, in spite of her neglect of her maternal duties, had grown into a good Christian and an illustrious senator. He had married Albina, daughter of the heathen Pontifex, and had two children, the younger Publicola and the younger Melania. This young lady, at the age of thirteen, had been married to Pinianus, a youth of seventeen, son of a former Praefect of Africa. They had no children, and the one object of the grandmother was to separate the young

[1] *Ep.* cli. 9.

[2] Oros. vii. 42; Aug. *Ep.* cli.

[3] *Hist. Laus.* ch. 119.

people and turn them into ascetics. Their parents and all their relations strongly and unanimously opposed this suggestion, and the aged devotee had "to fight with wild beasts," as Palladius expresses it, in order to carry her point—the wild beasts being, as he proceeds to tell us, the senators and their wives. By the force of a terrible persistence and a constant appeal to their fears, she succeeded in persuading them to sell all their goods, even a country villa which was specially dear to them. Thus their vast estates in various parts of Spain and Gaul were sold, and the proceeds distributed to the poor. They manumitted no less than 8000 slaves, retaining those only who preferred to stay with them, and they only reserved their estates in Sicily, Campania, and Africa, to support monasteries and the poor. Melania could not, however, persuade them to bury themselves in a cloister, and, after they had left Rome, she returned indignantly to Palestine, where she died within forty days in her monastery.

After a residence in Sicily, Pinianus, his wife, and Albina crossed to Africa, and spent the winter of 414 at Tagaste with the Bishop Alypius, whom they had known in Italy. The times were depressed, and the bishop, with his people, profited in every way by the piety and generosity of their noble guests. Not content with immense donations to the poor, they enriched the Church of Tagaste with estates, and presented gorgeous vestments, enwoven with gold and precious stones, for the use of the presbyters. They also founded and endowed a monastery for a hundred monks, and a nunnery for one hundred and thirty virgins, together with various hospitals, so that alike the ecclesiastics and the citizens of Tagaste were highly pleased.[1] One of their main objects in visiting Africa had been to see Augustine, but he was unable to come to Tagaste to pay them his respects. He was getting old; his hair was white; his health was infirm. He had always been peculiarly susceptible to cold, and the winter had been severe. Further than this, he had several times incurred the censures of his people for his long absences from Hippo, though he never left them except for health, or on the affairs of the Church. He tells us that his flock was always infirm and unstable. On one occasion he found it "*periculosissime scandalisatum*" by one of his absences; and all the more because he had many detractors who never missed an opportunity of alienating from him the affections of

[1] *Epp.* 124-126; Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* 119; Surius, *Vit. Sanct. Melaniae.*

those who seemed to love him.[1] This state of things was very painful to him, and he wrote to the noble Romans a letter of apology, saying that though he could not then come to welcome them to Africa, he hoped that, sooner or later, he should meet them in some other city.

Under these circumstances, Pinianus and Melania came to Hippo, accompanied by Alypius. Age and ill health prevented Albina from coming with them, and this, as the event proved, was unfortunate, for she was a person of stronger mind and calmer judgment than her daughter. If she had been with them, Pinianus might have been saved from weak compliances, and Augustine from an ordeal out of which he did not escape unblamed. The unwarrantable practice of seizing persons against their will, and making presbyters and bishops of them, had now become chronic, and though it had succeeded well in the case of Augustine, of Paulinus, of Ambrose, and others—and doubtless also in instances where it was a sort of pre-arranged farce, like that which still prevails in the Coptic Church—yet it was fertile of simoniacal motives and hypocritical abuse. Aware of his peril, and perhaps putting less trust in Augustine and his rude population of sailors and fishers than in his friend Alypius, Pinianus exacted from his host a pledge, in the presence of Alypius, that he would never ordain him presbyter against his will; nay, more, that he would never, by any advice or influence, press him to take orders.[2] Pinianus had been supremely generous at Tagaste, and he knew enough of human nature to be sure that Hippo longed to share the advantages which he had bestowed upon the neighbouring diocese. Although only a fraction of his vast wealth and that of Melania was left to them, it was still sufficiently ample to excite cupidity, and this cupidity was still further inflamed by the benefactions which he now gave to Augustine, and which the bishop divided among the clergy, the monks, and the poor.

The Hipponenses had thus as it were "tasted blood," and a plot was got up—in which there is reason to fear that some of the beneficiaries among the monks and clergy had a large share—to secure the advantage which would accrue to the city from the permanent residence of the noble and wealthy devotees. Why should all that stream of gold flow into the coffers of the Church of Tagaste? If Alypius and the Tagastenses had foregone

[1] *Ep.* cxxii. [2] *Ep.* cxxvi. 1.

the blessed opportunity of securing a millionaire and a patrician for their presbyterate, so much better was the chance for Hippo. Who could be very scrupulous when the object in view was so pious? Whenever a man became a presbyter or a bishop public opinion expected, and indeed at Hippo demanded, that he should at once give up his entire possessions to the common good of the Church. Augustine indeed had openly proclaimed to the people that he would neither admit any one among the body of his clergy, nor retain him in it, unless he succumbed to this exacting and autocratic regulation. Here then was a chance for the monks, the clerics, the paupers of this turbulent town. Estates in Sicily, estates in Campania, estates in Africa—all this Pactolus of wealth would become the ecclesiastical property of the Christians at Hippo, and they would number a descendant of the noblest families of Rome among their ministers, if they could only be successful in one pious *coup d'état!*

They seized their opportunity, and all the circumstances are frankly described to us by Augustine himself. At one of the Church assemblies Pinianus, Melania, and Alypius were present, and there was a great throng of people. Augustine was seated in his episcopal chair at the end of the apse, and Pinianus felt himself secure in the promise he had received. The bishop, however, had not yet dismissed the catechumens, when there began to arise a great shout, "Pinianus for presbyter! Pinianus presbyter!" Augustine at first behaved worthily of himself. He rose from his seat, advanced to the choir-screen, and said to the people, "I have promised Pinianus that he shall not be ordained against his will. If you ordain him I will resign my bishopric." Having said this he again retired to his seat. For a moment, but for a moment only, the conspiracy was checked. It broke out again like a suppressed flame, because, he tells us, the people either hoped to force him to break his promise, or at any rate to force Alypius to ordain his guest. Some of the leading members of the congregation now mounted the steps of the choir and tried to persuade him to yield, but he said, "I will not break my word to Pinianus, nor will I suffer any other bishop to ordain him without my express permission. Even if I did permit it, I should still be breaking my pledge. Besides, a forcible ordination will but drive him away from Hippo and from Africa." But the hot-blooded and self-interested mob were now too much infuriated to listen to reason, and Augustine—not

to his credit, as he himself must have felt—began to waver and to lose his head. The people pressed upon Alypius with dangerous menaces, accusing him of the very greed of which they themselves were now so flagrantly guilty. "You want to keep Pinianus to yourself," they shouted, "that you may dip your hands in his purse." Augustine was overwhelmed with shame when he heard the gross insults with which, in his own cathedral church, his unruly flock assailed a brother bishop whom he esteemed and loved. He admits that the tumult terrified and confused him, and he afterwards entreated the prayers of Alypius that he might be forgiven.[1] He felt extreme alarm lest Alypius and his friends should suffer personal violence in his very presence, and he was so paralysed by the dread of the church being wrecked by the baser part of the mob that he was ready to catch at any straw. He would not indeed say one word to influence the decision of Pinianus, but on the other hand it remains a blot on his courage and on his character that he did not ascend his pulpit—as a Chrysostom would have done, and did, under similar circumstances—and repress the violence of the simonists by his immense personal authority. He thought of leaving the church, but feared that, if he did, murder might take place; nor could he even venture to go out side by side with Alypius—which would have necessarily ended the whole scene—lest one of the rioters should assault him. He sat on his episcopal throne overwhelmed with grief and incapable of decision,[2] when a sudden message from Pinianus, brought to him by one of his monks, seemed to offer a loophole of escape. Pinianus sent to tell him that, if he were forced into ordination, he would take an oath to leave Africa, which would render their greedy violence of no avail. Augustine again showed weakness. He would not announce the message to the people for fear of infuriating them yet more; but as Pinianus entreated his protection, he left the apse where he was sitting and came to him. Meanwhile the young Roman, who also showed timidity, had sent him a second message by another monk, named Timasius—and it is a suspicious circumstance that these monks, who would have been the chief gainers by his bounty, seem to have been

[1] *Ep.* cxxvi. i. "In fratrem meum Alypium multa contumeliosa et indigna clamabant." Comp. cxxv. 2.

[2] *Ep.* cxxvi. 3: "Inter hos aestus meos gravemque moerorem *et nullius consilii respirationem.* . . ."

swarming round him[1]—that he was willing to swear further that *he would remain at Hippo if he were not ordained by force.* Could there be a more transparent proof of the fact that the violence which in such cases was often represented as an impulse of the Holy Spirit was dictated by greed alone? The message came to Augustine like a refreshing breeze in the midst of his perplexity.[2] He hurried as fast as he could to Alypius to tell him of this new promise,[3] thinking, he says, that he ought to prefer the acceptance of a spontaneous offer to the destruction of his church. Alypius, however, knowing what he owed to his friends, and also that Augustine was responsible for maintaining order and protecting them, curtly refused to give any advice.[4] Then Augustine felt bound to mount the pulpit and tell the people what Pinianus promised. They, however (so disinterested was their desire that he should be ordained!), after a little muttering among themselves, wanted him to add to the oath that, if ever he consented to ordination, it should be at Hippo only. They could trust themselves to force further concessions out of him at a later time. Pinianus agreed; the people demanded an oath; but here Pinianus wavered again. "How if necessary circumstances should force him to leave Hippo? how if there should be an invasion of Goths? How," added Melania, "if there should be a plague?" but this last suggestion was rejected by her husband. "I dare not suggest the possibility of invasion to the people," answered Augustine; "it would be a bad omen, and would look like an excuse." It was decided, however, to try the popular feelings on the subject, and no sooner had he come to the words "necessary circumstances" than there rose a shout, and the tumult recommenced. Pinianus again gave way and persuaded Augustine to come forward with him, in spite of fatigue, and to stand by his side. The oath that *he would stay at Hippo unconditionally*—an oath disgraceful to the people and discreditable to Augustine himself, who had thus seen the rights of hospitality violated in his presence—was publicly taken. The people shouted "God be thanked!" and

[1] Augustine says that he could not find that any of the monks or clergy were in the plot.

[2] *Ep.* cxxvi. "Hic ego in tantis angustiis quasi aura spirante recreatus."

[3] Id. "Gradu concitatiore." Augustine's movements through the church—in spite of what he calls the "furens et constipatus populus," and their "perseverantissimus et horrendus fremitus"—seem to have been perfectly unimpeded.

[4] Id. "Hinc me, inquit, nemo consulat."

demanded that the oath should be signed by Pinianus. The catechumens were dismissed. Then the people, by the mouths of the faithful, begged the two bishops to subscribe also. Augustine took the *stylus*, and had half written his name, when Melania interfered, and prevented him from finishing it. Augustine tells us that he could not imagine what difference it would make, but the lady had probably some dim feeling that "*litera scripta manet*," and wished to save him from what she not unnaturally regarded as a permanent disgrace. She and her husband openly complained that the whole scene, ending as it did in the deplorable fiasco of extorting from a Roman patrician, in a church, and in the presence of two bishops, an enforced oath that he would live in a particular town, was nothing more nor less than a piece of brigandage, all the more infamous because it was hypocritical. Augustine evidently felt some pangs of conscience. He was sensible of the disgrace, and admitted the violence, only trying (and very unsuccessfully) to shelter his people from the charge of greedy hypocrisy. Alypius, deeply and justly offended by the menaces and insults which had been addressed to him, at once left Hippo, and soon afterwards Pinianus secretly followed him. This gave the Hipponenses an opportunity for fresh riots, to which they added the publication of disgraceful calumnies. Whether Pinianus merely claimed the right of any other citizen to go and return when he liked, or whether he doubted the cogency of a forced oath, is uncertain. The latter had probably something to do with it, for Alypius wrote a dignified but reproachful letter to Augustine, in which he mentioned this as a question to be discussed, and argued that at any rate Pinianus was not to be treated as if he were a public slave. Albina was much more outspoken. She upbraided Augustine with not having kept a promise which he had distinctly made. She charged his people with barefaced greed in their desire to keep her son-in-law among them either as a presbyter or as a rich layman, in order that they might be the gainers in money by what she did not hesitate to call his "exile" or "relegation," or even his "deportation"; and she too asked whether he was bound to keep an oath which had been simply wrung out of him by force. Augustine replied that no one would believe the oath of a bishop, or any one else, if it were not regarded as binding in all cases; but the extreme weakness of his reply to Albina's plain

speaking—for which he thanked her—seems to show that, though not guilty of any share in the gross misconduct of his people, he felt in his conscience that he had acted with a lack of firmness of which his friends had good right to complain.

How the affair ended we do not know. If Pinianus felt himself bound to return to Hippo it must have been with feelings of the deepest disgust. It is probable that Augustine prevailed on the Hipponenses to liberate Pinianus from an oath which testified to their disgrace and his own pusillanimity. Perhaps the young Roman lost the remainder of his property from the violent exactions of Count Heraclian, and when he was reduced to poverty there was no more reason for detaining him. However that may be, it is certain that a year or two later Albina, Pinianus, and Melania were with Jerome in Palestine. They wrote to ask the advice of Augustine about a discussion which they had held with Pelagius, and also sent him kind messages through Jerome. We are glad to know that they were reconciled after so severe a grievance. Probably Augustine did not so readily forgive himself. Deprived of all things, the husband and wife at last separated. Melania died seven years after in a convent—perhaps that founded by her grandmother—in Jerusalem. Pinianus became the abbot of a little community of thirty monks.

XVII

Continued

LAST DAYS OF AUGUSTINE

"'Lo my one holiday!' oft the old man cried;
'When shall the bishop's holiday come again?'
When the fierce Huns are on the mountain-side,
And he lies sick to death in autumn;—when
The cactus flowers of Hippo 'neath the blue
Are steeped with crimson blood-drops through and through."

BISHOP OF DERRY.

SECTION XIII

BESIDES his private griefs, which were many and severe, Augustine, in common with all his Western contemporaries, was afflicted by the perils and miseries of his time. The perpetual advance of the hordes of barbarians, and the many intrigues, infamies, murders, and seditions, which marked the reigns of the feeble Arcadius and the yet feebler Honorius, were a perpetual source of terror. Stilicho was the one bulwark of the West, and even before his disgraceful assassination Jerome was openly and secretly sneering at him because he was by birth a half-barbarian.[1] When Stilicho was murdered there was nothing to defend Rome from its destruction by Alaric on Aug. 24, 410. We have seen how that tremendous event shook the heart of Jerome, and forced him to cry, "O God, the heathen have come into Thine inheritance."[2] Augustine felt no less deeply the horror of the time. In 409, distressed beyond measure by the wars and rumours of wars on every side, and the alarm caused by the Circumcellions in the diocese of Hippo, the presbyter Victorinus had written to

[1] See *supra*, pp. 284, 286.
[2] Jer. *Ezek.* iii. *Praef.* See *supra*, p. 288.

ask him for counsel and consolation. What was he to think of, what answer was he to give to, the taunts of Pagans, when news kept coming in of monks being massacred and consecrated virgins seized by ruffians? Augustine answered that the sins of Pagans and Christians alike deserved punishment, but that those of Pagans, who knew not God's will, were less flagrant than those of Christians, who knew it. The Christians of that day could not, he said, match themselves with men like Daniel and the Maccabees, who yet had to suffer great calamities and confessed to God that they deserved them. Let Victorinus take refuge in prayer and duty. The seizure of virgins might even redound to God's glory. Thus a niece of Severus, Bishop of Sitifa, had been captured by barbarians, and immediately three brothers of the house in which she was kept as a captive fell grievously ill. The mother entreated the captive virgin to pray for them, promising that if they recovered she should be restored to her parents. She prayed and fasted and was heard. The barbarians returned her with honour and uninjured to her own family.[1]

But if we ask how it was that imperial Rome bowed herself into the dust before hordes of rude barbarians, beneath her by an immeasurable inferiority in all but courage and manhood, the answer is that on the one hand Paganism was effete with an absolute decrepitude, and that Christianity, as it was then understood and in part perverted, did not supply the old heroism and battle-brunt which enables every living nation to find an impenetrable bulwark in the strong arms of her sons. The energies of Christians in the fourth century were no longer political or national. The Christian Emperors, except Theodosius, were for the most part feeble and wretched puppets in the hands of bigots, women, eunuchs, and priests. The popular form of Christianity was monastic and superstitious. It cooled the patriotism or hampered the energies of statesmen and warriors. The pure stream of the Gospel was rendered turbid by unnatural and effeminating influences, and ecclesiastical dominance was ill fitted to preserve social order. There was too indiscriminate a mixture of civil and sacerdotal interests. "Men forgot strong virtues for monacal abstinences, their country for the cloister, and war for controversy. The age of theological splendour was the prelude of barbarism. So true is it that religion, a Divine support for the human soul, is not an all-sufficing instrument for politics, and

[1] *Ep.* cxi. 7.

cannot supply for any nation the need of freedom and of toil."[1] We must not, however, forget that if Christianity helped to destroy the Empire, it helped also to rebuild it on truer foundations. "The Roman Empire," says Montalembert, "without the barbarians, was an abyss of servitude and corruption. The barbarians without the monks were chaos. The barbarians and the monks united recreated a world which was to be called Christendom."[2]

After the capture of Rome Augustine preached several times to his people on that subject,[3] and the circumstance which most afflicted him was the ground which it gave to Pagans to set down all these catastrophes to the anger of their offended gods against the votaries of the new religion. This was the theme of the last Pagan historians Eunapius and Zosimus, and of the last Christian poet Merobaudes.[4] It was the desire to refute this taunt which gave occasion to Augustine's greatest book, the *City of God*. The young Spanish priest Orosius, in writing the celebrated history which Augustine had encouraged him to undertake, began with the words "*Divina providentia agitur mundus et homo.*" This rule of Divine Providence over the world and man was the central conception which Augustine desired to illustrate. Orosius's history was chiefly meant for a comment on the eleventh book after the first ten had been separately published. Augustine meant to address the work to his friend Marcellinus, but his judicial murder took place in 413, before he had finished the second book. When finished the *De Civitate Dei* occupied twenty-two books, and though he began it "in a flame of zeal for God" against the blasphemies of the Pagans, it was often interrupted by other duties.[5] In his *Retractations* he tells us that the first five books were meant to refute polytheism, and the charges brought by its defenders against the supposed perils caused by Christianity.[6] The second five books were addressed to those who, admitting that human catastrophes had occurred and would occur in all ages, said that polytheism was necessary to secure the happiness of the future life. The remaining twelve books are positive, and not, like the first ten, mainly negative. They

[1] Villemain, p. 507. See Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, ii. ch. ix.
[2] *Monks of the West*, i. 283.
[3] *Serm. de Urbis Excidio.*
[4] The taunt was bandied on both sides. A statue was erected to Merobaudes in Rome in A.D. 435.
[5] *Epp.* cxxxvi. cxxxviii. clxix. 1.
[6] *Retractt.* ii. 41.

contrast the two cities—the city of God and the city of the world—in their origin (11-14), in their development (15-18), and in their final destiny (19-22). The whole book deals with the two cities, but receives its name from the true and eternal City of God. Many such books have since been written, notably the great *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* of Bossuet; but the conception of so grand a design is due to the fertile brain of the Bishop of Hippo. The opening words, *Gloriosissimam Civitatem Dei*, are, as has been truly said, a keynote to the whole book. It is Augustine's conception of what a history of the Church should be, as well as of the lessons which he learnt from the manifestation of God in the history of the world. It abounds in erudition and in eloquence.

His argument throughout the earlier books resembles that in the Book of Wisdom. He says that sorrows and calamities fall alike on Christians and heathens, but that their effect is different. The fire that melts the gold hardens the clay; the fire that purges the wheat destroys the chaff. God means the trials of Christians to be for their blessing and amelioration, those of heathens to be for their punishment.[1] Rome had become half Pagan during its siege by Alaric, and even when Rome was nothing but a Pagan city it had been taken by the Gauls and burnt by Nero. And, after all, the conquerors of Rome on this occasion, though heretics, were still Christians. Thanks to the brave Arian bishop Ulfilas, they had the Bible in their hands. Augustine was awed by the fall of Rome, but it did not cause him anything like the horror and distress which it caused to Jerome. He regarded it, in fact, as a Divine judgment upon a decrepit Paganism.

In these books he gives a sweeping survey of the Roman Empire and its history, to prove that selfishness was its ruling principle. Then he examines the general idea of heathenism, exposes its deep-seated corruption, and identifies its deities with demons. On the other hand, he finds the centre of Christianity in Christ Himself, and traces it through the sacred history. Finally he ends the entire aeon of mortality in an eternal dualism—the unchangeable and irremediable separation of the bad from the good. His whole philosophy of history reduces itself to an irreconcilable antagonism. The city of evil is left to

[1] This is the line of argument somewhat sophistically urged in the Book of Wisdom, xiv. *sqq.*

its own fate. Its very virtues are unworthy of praise. The beauty and profundity of Greek literature, the earnestness with which philosophers had knocked at the doors of truth, the splendid instances of virtue and self-sacrifice which illuminate the early history of the Roman Republic, nay, even the fact that his own conception of God came mainly from Neo-Platonic teachers, might have sufficed to show him that his fundamental conception was narrow and imperfect. Humanity is the same everywhere. Its elements are identical in the evil and the good, and as the good often triumphs in the individual man it triumphs also even in the heathen world. Even in this great work we find the taint of the Manichean conceptions in which Augustine had been so long entangled. God is One, not two. Throughout His whole Universe with equal love He makes His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. It is a world in which even while we were yet sinners Christ died for all, Christ died for the ungodly. Nor does Augustine touch on the deep failure of the Church of God itself, so far as it is a visible community, although it was becoming so degenerate that thirty years later Salvian called it not a *placatrix* but an *exacerbatrix Dei*. But still the *Civitas Dei* is a splendid monument of the genius of the writer, and a landmark in the progress of history. It contains a Christian philosophy of history, imperfect, indeed, and in many respects mistaken, yet strikingly suggestive. "It is the funeral oration of the Roman Empire pronounced in a cloister; the interpretation of the past by the new genius which changed the world." It illustrates in a very marked degree the difference between the old order and the new. It shows how in the new belief the interest of the City of God had superseded those of the Empire, and "all the moral energy which remained in the civilised world was turned towards pious contemplation, and yielded the Empire to the barbarians."

Augustine had more and more need, as the years darkened around him, to take refuge in the thoughts and hopes which he has enshrined in this his greatest work. At the time of the conference against the Donatists Alaric was preparing to invade Africa, and fix at Carthage the seat of a new empire. A storm destroyed his fleet in the short voyage between Rhegium and Messina, and he died. The ruin of that smiling land and of its flourishing church was destined to be accomplished by Genseric,

a barbarian far less generous and more ruthless than the conqueror of Rome. The fortunes of Hippo and of all Africa were involved in the conduct of a man whom Augustine had loved and honoured, and were the indirect and unforeseen result of advice which he himself had innocently given.

This man was Count Bonifacius, who is praised both by Pagan and Christian historians, and who with his treacherous friend and rival Aetius is called by Procopius "the last of the Romans."[1] Augustine and Alypius alike regarded him as a sincere Christian, and more than once he seemed on the point of forsaking the world, in which he occupied so splendid a position, and turning monk.[2] Shortly after the death of his wife he met the two bishops at Tubunae, and told them his desire to abandon war and public life, and to occupy himself with the combat against demons in the saintly solitude of a monastery. They dissuaded him from his purpose, and told him that he could best serve the Church by repressing the incursions of barbarians and helping to crush the schism of the Donatists.[3] The advice proved supremely fatal to themselves, to Boniface, to Africa, to the whole Roman Empire. This was in 417. But for that quiet interview between the warlike count and the Christian bishops there might have been a difference in the history of the world.

In 422 Boniface was sent to fight under Castinus against the Vandals in Spain, and he would probably have defeated them entirely, had he not thrown up his command in disgust at the arrogant incompetence of his commander. He returned to Ostia, and thence to Africa. During the brief usurpation of John he held Africa for the Empress-Regent Placidia and her young son Valentinian III., who had taken refuge at Constantinople. This procured him the highest honour, but also the extreme envy of Felix, the master of the soldiers, who with his wife Padusa and a deacon named Grunnitus ruled the palace. Aetius, too—a Sarmatian who had risen to the highest military rank in the Roman army, and had great influence over the Huns, among whom he had lived as a hostage—was jealous of Boniface, though they had once been brothers in arms. The count had been sent by Placidia on an embassy to the Vandals of Baetica. They were virulent and persecuting Arians, and at the Vandal court

[1] Procop. *Hist. Vand.* i. 195; Olympius 42; Prosp. Aquit. *Chron.* A.D. 422; Vict. Vitensis, *De Persec. Vand.* i. 6.

[2] *Epp.* clxxxv. 1, clxxxix. 7, 8.

[3] *Ep.* clxxxv.

Boniface met and wooed as his second wife a beautiful and wealthy Spanish lady named Pelagia, who was a niece of Genseric. She was an Arian. He thought that he had won her over to the Nicene faith, but unhappily he was mistaken. The house of Boniface began to be filled by Arians. His daughter was baptized by an Arian bishop, and to the intense horror of the African Church some Christian virgins were also rebaptized by the heretics. These circumstances increased the jealousy and suspicion which were carefully fostered by the rivals of Boniface at the court, and Aetius advised Placidia to send for him, while at the same time he sent to the count a secret message that if he came he would be assassinated. Boniface refused to come, and prepared for war. At first successful in his revolt, he was afterwards defeated, and meanwhile Africa was plunged in unspeakable miseries. His soldiers had to be maintained as well as the imperial armies. The tribes of Mount Atlas seized the opportunity given them by these distractions to rush down on the defenceless country. Harvests were burnt and trampled, towns destroyed, churches pillaged. Terror and desolation reigned on every side.

Full of anguish, Augustine at last found an opportunity to write to his former friend. The character of Boniface had deteriorated in every way, and it was even rumoured that he had not only broken his vow of continence by his second marriage, but had plunged into gross licentiousness. All that could be urged by a Christian bishop was expressed by Augustine with pathetic eloquence and earnest appeal. Alas! it was now too late to recall Boniface to his former state of mind. Unable to hold his own against the native tribes of Africa on the one side, and the imperial forces on the other, he turned traitor to his country, and let loose the whirlwind by summoning the Vandals to his assistance. In May 428, 50,000 wild Vandals, Alans, and Goths landed in Africa under their king Genseric. They had been carried over from Spain in the ships of Boniface, and in two years became masters of the province, which they held for a century. They at once made common cause with the native Mauretanians and the Donatist Circumcellions, and they all turned their common hatred against the Church. Then followed scenes of unspeakable horror which Possidius and others have described. Armed with weapons of all kinds, the brutal hosts of barbarians poured themselves over that smiling land which

had been for so many ages the granary of Rome. Victor Vitensis gives us a frightful picture of this Vandal invasion.[1] Towns were destroyed and their inhabitants massacred or scattered abroad; churches were deprived of their ministers, of whom some had been slain with tortures, others by the sword, while a yet more wretched number had been driven to apostasy, and had become the slaves of their Arian captors. Hymns and praises were heard no more, and in most places the churches themselves had been reduced to ashes. The sacraments were no longer administered, for none sought them. Many fled into forests and mountain caves, where they died of hunger and privation. Bishops and clergy, no longer able to help the poor, were themselves reduced to indigence and even to beggary. Three cities only—Carthage, Hippo, and Cirta—were able to hold out for a time. Augustine sometimes solaced himself with the remark which he had heard from some wise man "that a man could hardly be great who felt surprise that timbers and stones fall or that mortals die"; but every gleam of happiness had vanished from his life. Tears were his food day and night, while men daily said unto him, "Where is now thy God?"

But misery did not make him neglect his duty. He preached frequently to his terrified and despairing people, and did his best to advise and teach them if he could not alleviate their miseries.[2] When Quodvultdeus wrote to ask him what congregations and their ministers ought to do when hard pressed by the enemy, he replied that if the people wished to fly into fortified places it was not for the bishops to forbid them, but they ought themselves to abide by their flocks and churches as long as it remained in their power to discharge any of the duties of their office. Honoratius, Bishop of Thiave, wrote to ask "of what use was it for bishops to stay merely to witness deeds of massacre and outrage which they could not hinder, and to be tortured to death for not delivering up treasures which they did not possess?" He gave the same reply as to Quodvultdeus, and when Honoratius quoted to him the command of Christ, "When they persecute you in one

[1] S. Victor Vitensis, *Historia Persecutionis Vandalicae.*

[2] When Victor Vitensis says, *Hist. Persec. Vandal.* i. 3, "*Tunc illud eloquentiae quod ubertim per omnes campos ecclesiae decurrebat ipso metu siccatum est flumen,*" he can only be referring to the period of Augustine's illness. He says that up to that time he had written two hundred and thirty-two books, besides innumerable letters, homilies, and expositions.

city, flee to another," he wrote back to say that there were but two circumstances in which he considered the flight of a bishop to be justifiable—one, as in the case of Athanasius and Cyprian, when the bishop only was attacked, and his sacred functions could be discharged by those who were not persecuted; and the other, when all their people have left them. Otherwise, no bishop ought ever to leave his people at the very time when they most needed his ministrations. Nor did Augustine neglect his controversial duties even in these days of labour, trouble, rebuke, and blasphemy. He answered the books of Julian of Eclanum. He wrote against and disputed with the Arians whom the Vandal irruption had once more brought into prominence. He continued, but in a tone of unwonted mildness, his arguments against the Semi-Pelagian monks of Marseilles. At the request of Quodvultdeus he even began a book on heresies, which he was never able to finish.

When Count Darius was sent from Ravenna to try and restore peace Augustine helped him with his best advice, and interchanged with him a pleasant correspondence, during which he sent to Darius some of his books and received from him some valuable medicines. The visit of Darius put an end to many delusions. Boniface showed him the treacherous letter of Aetius which had driven him into rebellion, and he became reconciled to Placidia, who was now alarmed by the ambitious designs of Aetius. Boniface endeavoured to undo the frightful mischief which he had caused. He offered Genseric a vast sum of money if he would retire to Spain; but Genseric laughed in his face. Then he tried threats, which were equally unsuccessful. At last he took up arms against the Vandals to whom he had betrayed the most necessary province of the Empire. But his old success had deserted him. He was defeated and driven into Hippo, which was at once besieged by Genseric both by land and sea. This was at the beginning of June 430.

Augustine was now surrounded in his monastery by a number of bishops who had fled from the conflagration of their churches and the ruin of their cities. Among them was his biographer, Possidius, who had enjoyed his friendship for forty years. They all wept and fasted and prayed together, imploring God to help them under this terrible tribulation. "I have but one prayer to God amid these calamities," said Augustine to them; "either that He would set free this city from the enemy, or if not, that He

would make His servants strong to bear His will, or at least that He would take me to Himself from this world."

Towards the end of August, when the siege had lasted three months, he fell ill, and was able to preach no more. He had often told his friends that no baptized Christian, not even the saintliest bishop, ought to leave this life without a worthy and ample penitence. He acted up to his ideal. As soon as he felt that the fever was dangerous he had the seven penitential psalms written out for him in large letters and hung on the walls around his bed, that he might be able constantly to read them. Ten days before he died he begged his friends to visit him no more, except when the physicians came, or his food was brought to him. He spent his whole days in prayer and meditation, untroubled by any earthly business. He had no will to make, for he had no possessions to leave, and several years before he had commended to his people the choice of his valued presbyter Heraclius as his successor in the see of Hippo. The end of his busy and troubled life was at hand, though he was in full possession of sight, hearing, and all his faculties. He died on Aug. 28, 430, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his episcopate. From early manhood to old age he had lived in the service of his Church.

In the June of the following year the Vandals abandoned the siege from want of supplies. Boniface, who had received reinforcements from Rome and Constantinople, once more fought a pitched battle with them. He was defeated, and returned to Italy, where in 432 he fell by the lance-thrust of Aetius. Hippo was deserted by its inhabitants, and burnt to the ground by the Vandals. The only thing which escaped the conflagration was the library which Augustine had consecrated to the use of the Church. Carthage fell before the Vandals in 439. The Church of northern Africa was destroyed, and the country fell back into a desolation and barbarism from which it has never fully emerged. Augustine was spared the anguish of witnessing the final destruction of the city which he had loved so long and the Church which he had served so faithfully. He had done his day's work, and God sent him sleep.

He was the last Bishop of Hippo. The people escaped by sea, and in the seventh century the town ceased to exist. When he died there were five hundred Catholic bishops in the province. Not twenty years later there seem to have been only eighteen.

Not long ago Bona fell into the hands of the French, and it has been proposed to build a cathedral over the supposed site of Augustine's grave.[1] He is still traditionally remembered in the neighbourhood as *Rumi Kebir*, "the great Christian."

[1] On the translation of his relics from Pavia to Bona, see Poujoulat, *Hist. de St. Aug.* i. 413.

XVII

Continued

THEOLOGY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

"Quid habet orbis Christianus hoc auctore magis *aureum* vel *augustius?*"
ERASMUS, *Ep. Dedics.* 1529.

SECTION XIV

AUGUSTINE had been endowed by God with a rich and many-sided nature, and his life was extraordinarily full of the most varied labours. In him a heart glowing like that of the cherubim, and an intellect keen, subtle, and casuistical as that of a schoolman, acted and reacted upon each other, and lent their combined force to an African nature, passionate as that of Tertullian, and a will of indomitable energy and persistence. And these elements of his temperament were powerfully affected by the moral and intellectual history of his life. It was a life of violent reaction from violent extremes of practice and of theory. He had plunged at an early age into sensual dissipation, from which at one bound he passed into an exaggerated estimate of the intrinsic value of monastic asceticism. He had lived in haughty self-reliance; the reaction, aided by controversy, had carried him into a conception of God which annihilated the freedom of the human will. As a Manichee he had appealed exclusively to the reason, and after a brief interspace of scepticism and Neo-Platonism (each of which left its own influence), he ended by an extravagant reliance on external authority. The varying phases of his life, the oscillations of opinion which necessitated many subsequent rehandlings, the sporadic manner in which his opinions were expressed, the extent to which they were modified by the dialectic

exigencies of incessant polemical encounters, render it difficult to frame any exact system from his writings.

Hence the most opposite parties—Reformers and Romanists, Jansenists and Jesuits, the adherents of Molina and those of Bajus, the admirers of Petavius and those of Calixt, Sacramentarians and Zwinglians, Tridentines and Anglicans—have alike claimed his authority. He profoundly influenced writers so unlike each other as Erigena and Anselm, Aquinas and Bonaventura. Luther seized on his doctrine of Justification, Calvin on his theory of Predestination, the Schoolmen on his systematising methods, the Mystics on his burning spirit of devotion, the Popes on his idea of the Church. He anticipated some of the views and arguments alike of Descartes, of Leibnitz, and of Butler; he is at once the founder of Scholasticism and the first of the Western Mystics.[1]

It is not easy to state with any exactitude the opinion of Augustine about the Sacraments. He regarded Baptism as a necessary condition of salvation, and it almost seems as if he attributed to it an *ex opere operato* validity. Of the Lord's Supper he speaks partly as the sacrament of unity with the body of Christ and partly as a sacrifice. In the first aspect the Holy Communion is the Sacrament of Incorporation in the Church, which he defines as Christ's body diffused throughout the world. He does not regard the Eucharist as *the sacrifice of Christ's actual body* (of which there seems to be no trace in Augustine's works), but the sacrifice by the Church *of herself* as the body of Christ. A few passages in the notes may help to throw light upon his views.[2]

The only shadow of a complete system which he has left is in

[1] See Cunningham, *St. Austen*, p. 35; Wiggers, *August. u. Pelag.* i. 27: "The *cogito ergo sum*" of Descartes repeats the *Si enim fallor sum* of Augustine, and "*Tu qui scis te nosse, scis esse te? Scio. Unde scis? Nescio. Simplicem te sentis? Nescio. Moveri te scis? Nescio. Cogitare te scis? Scio*" (*Solil.* ii. 1). See Ueberweg's *Hist. of Philos.* i. 333-346 (E.T.)

[2] The Church as the body of Christ, *Serm.* 272: "Panis est corpus Christi, calix est sanguis Christi. . . Vos autem estis corpus Christi." *Tract. in Joann. xxv.* sec. 12: "Quid paras dentes et ventrem? crede et manducasti." *xxvi.* sec. 1: "Credere in eum, hoc est manducare panem vivum." Sec. 15: "Hunc itaque cibum et potum *societatem vult intelligi corporis et membrorum suorum.*" *Enarr. in Psalm. iii.* sec. 1: "In quo (convivio) corporis et sanguinem *figuram* discipulis . . . tradidi." *c. Adim.* 12, sec. 3: "Non dubitavit Deus dicere hoc est corpus meum, cum *signum* daret corporis sui." *Ep.* xcviii. 9: "*Secundum quemdam modum sacramentum* corporis Christi corpus Christi est." For many other passages, see Dorner, *Augustinus*, pp. 263-276.

his brief *Enchiridion* to Laurentius. But in all his works he deals more (except so far as mere occasional words go) with God and with man—with theology and anthropology—than with the special work of Christ. He does indeed deal in a practical manner with the doctrine of the Trinity, but his main thought is the transcendent supremacy, and, so to speak, aloofness, of God, which he had learnt in no small measure from the Neo-Platonists. He exalts God's decree to the absolute annihilation of any real human freedom. Hence his Hamartiology—the doctrine of sins to which he devoted so much elaborate discussion—is radically vitiated ; and his Soteriology—his doctrine of a Saviour—though so orthodox that his very words were largely adopted by the Council of Chalcedon, was reduced to practical impotence. Augustine's Saviour is not the Saviour of the world. He is only the Saviour of the Church, and even in the Church itself the Saviour only of a mere handful of the elect, whom he saves only under strictly ecclesiastical conditions. It is the Church, not the living Christ, which becomes in the Augustinian system the one Mediator between God and man.

This, in fact, is the worst blot upon Augustine's theology. Much as he speaks of Christ, he robs Him of His most Divine prerogatives. So far from being the Redeemer of all mankind, He becomes a mere instrument which enabled God to carry out for a very small number in a very small Church a predestination to individual election, entirely apart from any merit or demerit of their own.

Unhappily Augustine, though a marvellously acute and subtle, was not a consecutive or homogeneous thinker, but developed, and sometimes improvised, his convictions according to polemical needs. In his argument with the Manicheans he never lost his tendency to pessimism, while in his controversy with the Donatists he had elaborated his Church system, and in that with the Pelagians he had thought out the novelties about predestination and original sin. An external fact—Adam's single sin—had, by some unique quality of its own, so totally depraved, distorted, vitiated, and empoisoned the whole nature of all his millions of descendants in all ages, that they were incapable of any good whatever, and could only be changed by an external act, baptism, which was so indispensable that every person dying unbaptized is eternally lost ; and even infants dying unbaptized cannot be saved. The result is that mankind as a whole is a lost and condemned

mass, doomed even before they were born to endless agonies.[1] Naturally, therefore, an almost unfathomable cleft was drawn by the new Pharisaism between the so-called secular and the so-called religious life. In the developments of this system, marriage and the possession of property were half-tolerated, half-disparaged; and utterly anti-Scriptural views both of God and of life gave the name of "religious" or "servants of God" only to monks, or virgins, or those who gave up their lives to an austere, morbid, and unnatural self-maceration. The theology of Augustine, and hence also that of the Middle Ages, was penetrated through and through with Dualism, and for the majority of the human race with practical despair.

To all this scholastic rigidity of formal doctrines and burdensome will-worship he was partly swept by the currents of superstition, and partly driven step by step by the confidence in his own inferential logic under the stress of never-ending disputes. Augustine was so incessantly occupied with proving the countless errors of individuals and of sects, that he came to regard theology as a series of propositions as clear and as exactly definable as those of Euclid.[2] The gate of the Church began to bristle with a fencework of finely-articulated dogmas, many of them arrived at by pure sophistry, defended with hard intolerance, and enforced by sheer authority. In each of his chief controversies he mingled a great error with great truths. The Manichees, and not he, were right when they refused to regard the Romish episcopal community as the depositary of all truth. The Donatists were right, and not he, when they denied that the Church was justified in resorting to persecution. The Pelagians were in the right, and not he, when they refused to admit an unmixed corruption and absolute depravity of human nature as the result of Adam's sin.[3]

[1] He says (*De Civ. Dei*, xxi. 12) that punishments are not meant to purify but ever to illustrate the Divine justice; that it would not be unjust if all men were eternally punished, but that a very few are saved to illustrate the Divine mercy. The majority "praedestinati sunt in aeternum ignem ire cum diabolo." It has often been said that Augustine was overshadowed to the last by the Manicheism of his early manhood. See, however, Neander, iv. 290. Mr. Cunningham points out that Wesley, though he had little sympathy with Augustine (*Works*, vi. 310), yet saw that he was no Calvinist.

[2] "He did not allow the unity and simplicity of his answers to be at all interfered with by large and inclusive views of truth. To the extreme contradictory on the one side he gave the extreme contradictory on the other."—Mozley, *Ruling Ideas in the Early Ages.*

[3] At the Hampton Court Conference the bishops refused to admit the Puritan

And of the true nature of the Church Augustine had a very narrow conception. He confounded the Church mainly with the clergy, and dwarfed the ideal of Christ into the founder of the dwindled Church instead of the Saviour of all mankind. He had not entered into the large conception of that Church of Christ into which many were to come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south—of that Church in which there were many folds and many mansions—above all, of that Church to which belong vast multitudes of those who are not ostensibly within its pale. The Church as represented by Ambrose overawed his wavering scepticism by its authoritative claim to be the sole possessor of truth.[1] The Church to him was an external establishment, subjected to the autocracy of bishops, largely dependent on the opinion of Rome. It was a Church represented almost exclusively by a sacerdotal caste, devoted to the aggrandisement of its own power, cut off by celibacy from ordinary human interests, armed with fearful spiritual weapons, and possessing the sole right to administer a grace which came magically through none but mechanical channels. And this Church might, nay was bound to *enforce* the acceptance of its own dogmas and customs even in minute details and in outward organisation. It was justified in enforcing unity by using the arm of the State to fetter free consciences by cruel persecution. And outside this Church, with its many abuses, its few elect, its vast masses arbitrarily doomed to certain destruction, its acknowledged multitudes of ambitious, greedy, ignorant, and unworthy priests—there was no salvation! Augustine substituted an organised Church and a supernatural hierarchy for an ever-present Christ. To Augustine more than any one is due the theory which was most prolific of the abiding curse inflicted on many generations by an arrogant and usurping priestcraft.

gloss into Article XVI. It may, however, be said that the "total depravity" of Calvin differs from the view of Augustine, who held "that sin is the defect of a good nature, which retains elements of goodness even in its most diseased and corrupted state." "Esse natura in qua nullum bonum sit non potest" (*De Civ. Dei*, xix. 13).

[1] The sentence "Ego vero Evangelio non crederem nisi me Catholicae Ecclesiae commoveret auctoritas" (*c. Epist. Manich.* 6), throws a disastrous light on Augustine's theology. He seems to have no conception of truth except as a "deposit" in the hands of an episcopate; nor of the Spirit as illuminating all true souls, but only as speaking by the decision of the orthodox bishops. His notes of the Church (as given in *c. Epist. Manich.* 5) are consistent with a Church as corrupt as that of Alexander Borgia.

The outward Church of Augustine was Judaic, not Christian. The whole Epistle to the Hebrews is a protest against it. And all that was most deplorable in this theology and ecclesiasticism became the most cherished heritage of the Church of the Middle Ages in exact proportion to its narrowest ignorance, its tyrannous ambition, its moral corruption, and its unscrupulous cruelty.

But though Augustinianism triumphed in the Church, it did not triumph without protest, nor did it triumph completely. Vehement as were his attacks on the Pelagians, the Greek Church could not be induced to share his opinions. Two synods—those of Jerusalem and Diospolis—accepted the explanations of Pelagius, and one Pope, Zosimus, until he was frightened into changing sides, not only declared his innocence but rebuked his opponents. Theodore of Mopsuestia, the greatest exegete of the ancient Church, rejected Augustine's doctrine of original sin, and charged him with teaching ignoble thoughts of God which even human justice would condemn.[1] Vincent of Lerins, whose definition of what is Catholic in doctrine—"*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*"—has become proverbial, drew it up as a test which sufficed for the rejection of Augustine's novelties, since they had hitherto been held never, nowhere, and by none.[2] The extreme view of predestination, and of God as arbitrary will, belongs rather to Calvinism than to Christian doctrine. The notion that mercy is only a form of Divine Egoism, which has in view God's glory, not man's happiness, is more Mohammedan than Catholic. The doctrine of endless torments for all but the few, to which he first gave fixity in opposition to the opinion then prevalent even in the Western Church, has ever been confronted by God's revelation of Himself as a God of Love to the individual soul.[3] Semi-Pelagianism, in spite of his arguments, has been and is the general doctrine of the Christian Church.[4]

[1] See Gieseler, i. 339 (E.T.)

[2] See Migne, *Patrolog.* i. 640 ; *Tracts for the Times*, i. 592.

[3] As in Calvin and Jonathan Edwards, the blessed are to be indifferent if not delighted spectators of these torments (*De Civ. Dei*, ii. 30). How different was the whole system of Augustine from that of Origen ! The system of Origen is mainly occupied with God and Hope ; that of Augustine with punishment and sin. Origen yearns for a final unity, Augustine acquiesces in an eternal Dualism. Origen can scarcely bear the thought that even the devil should be unsaved ; Augustine is undisturbed in contemplating the endless torments of nearly all mankind !

[4] See Bright, *Anti-Pelagian Treatises*, lxiv.

Happily there was another and a far brighter side to the religious work of his life. As a bishop he diligently ruled his Church; as a preacher he surpassed all his contemporaries in practical usefulness; as a metaphysician he anticipated some of the best thoughts of Leibnitz and Malebranche. We may deplore the extremes of his theology, but the whole world has gained from the example of his holiness and the outpourings of his religious genius. He was a mystic as well as a schoolman, and shows a rare combination of passionate fervour with intrepid dogmatism and dialectical subtlety. If the ambitious priest, and ruthless inquisitor, and hard predestinarian, can claim his authority for much that obscures the mercy of God and darkens the life of man, on the other hand he has supported the faith and brightened the love of thousands who have been ignorant of his Church theories, and totally uninfluenced by his theological dogmatism. He was less firm than Athanasius, less learned than Jerome, less eloquent than Chrysostom, less profound than Gregory of Nazianzus, less clear-sighted than Theodore of Mopsuestia, less forcible in administration than Basil or Ambrose: yet in universality of grasp, in the combination of brilliant qualities, and in the intensity of personal religious conviction, he surpassed them all. No Pagan of his day can for a moment be compared to him. He was the last great man of Africa, and after him the reign of barbarism commenced.

In Art, the special attribute of Augustine is a transpierced or flaming heart, to show his ardent devotion and poignant repentance. One of the famous subjects of his life is his vision of the Child Jesus trying to empty the ocean into a hole in the sands to rebuke Augustine for endeavouring to fathom the mystery of the Trinity. This subject has been exquisitely treated by Murillo, and in Garofalo's picture in our National Gallery, and by Albrecht Durer, Rubens, Vandyck, and Raphael. Of modern pictures in which he is introduced the most famous is that by Ary Scheffer in 1845, which represents him at the window in Ostia with his mother Monnica. See Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art*, i. 308-315.

XVII

Continued

WORKS OF AUGUSTINE

"Deum et animam scire cupio. Nihilne plus? Nihil omnino."
Solil. i. 7.

"Roman his speech—not as men talked at Rome:
Here an Apostle spake, and there a psalm;
And here Philosophy had made its home:
Passion and thought he packed in epigram,
Marring the stone of speech wherewith he wrought,
But perfecting the likeness of his thought."
BISHOP OF DERRY.

SECTION XV

AUGUSTINE was a prolific writer. He felt it necessary to pray to God, "Libera me, Deus, a multiloquio" (*De Trin.* xv. 21). Even in his *Retractations* he mentions 93 works in 232 books, and this does not include all his writings, nor his numerous letters and sermons. His works fall into no less than eight divisions and I have not thought it necessary to mention all of them, omitting some which are of smaller importance.

I. PHILOSOPHICAL.

386. Against the Academics—3 books.
On a Happy Life.
On Order.
387. On the Immortality of the Soul.
On the "Quantity" of the Soul.[1]
389. On Music—8 books.

These books are of quite subordinate importance. They were written after his conversion, but before, or immediately after, his baptism, and are still largely dominated by Platonic conceptions.

[1] He also wrote in 419 *On the Soul and its Origin.* On his style see Ozanam, *Hist. Civil.* c. iv.

II. Apologetic.—To this class belongs his best work.

On the City of God—22 books.

This treatise, of which I have already spoken, was begun in 413, but not completed till 426, when he was 72 years old.

III. Polemic.

1. *Against the Manicheans.*

388. On the Morals of the Manicheans.
391. On the Usefulness of Believing.
392. On the Two Souls.[1]
Against Adimantus.
397. Against the Epistle of "the Foundation."
Against the Letter of a Manichee.
404. Against Faustus—33 books.
Against Felix—2 books.
On the Nature of the Good.
Against Secundinus.
Against Fortunatus.

2. *Against the Donatists.*

393. An Alphabetical Psalm against the Donatists.
Against the Letter of Donatus.
400. Against the Letter of Parmenian—3 books.
On Baptism—7 books.
Against the Letter of Petilian—3 books.
402. On the Unity of the Church.
406. To the Grammarian Cresconius—4 books.
On One Baptism.
411. The Conference with the Donatists—3 books
After the Conference.
417. On the Correction of the Donatists.
420. Against Gaudentius.

3. *Against the Pelagians.*[2]

410. On the Deserts of Sin, and on Remission—3 books.
On Marriage and Concupiscence—2 books.
Against Semi-Pelagians.
413. On the Spirit of the Letter.

[1] The Manicheans believed that there were two souls, one of which was a part of God, and the other from the race of Darkness. *Retractt.* i. 15.

[2] In many of these treatises (mainly written between 412-429) Augustine might wisely have remembered his own rule: "*Melius dubitare de occultis, quam litigare de incertis.*"

415. On Nature and Grace.
On the Doings of Pelagius.
On the Presence of God.
422. To Valentius, on Grace and Free-Will.
427. On Grace.
Against Gaudentius—2 books.
Against Two Letters—4 books.
428. On Predestination.
On the Gift of Perseverance.
Against Pelagius and Coelestius.
Doings with Emeritus.
429. Against Julian—6 books.

4. *Against the Heathen.*

Questions explained against the Pagans.

5. *Against the Priscillianists and Origenists.*

411. To Orosius.

6. *Against Arians.*

416. On the Trinity—15 books.
Against a Sermon of the Arians.
428. Conference with the Arian Maximin.
Against the Arians.
Against Maximin—2 books.

7. *Against Marcionists.*

420. Against an Enemy of the Law and the Prophets.

IV. Dogmatic.

426. On Christian Doctrine—4 books.

This important work is a sort of sketch of Hermeneutics and Homiletics, and may be regarded as an introduction to Augustine's Commentaries.

389. On the Master (Matt. xxiii. 10).
390. On True Religion.[1]
On the Spirit and the Letter.
On Seeing God.
393. On Faith and the Creed.
395. On Free-Will.

[1] In this book he had said that in his day miracles had ceased (xxv. secs. 45-46). This he retracts, in consequence of the miracles wrought by the relics of Gervasius and Protasius, especially a blind man's recovery of sight. (*Conf.* ix. 7, sec. 16 ; *Retractt.* i. 13, sec. 7.)

400. On Catechising the Uninstructed. It is addressed to a young deacon.
408. On the Grace of Christ.
413. On Faith and Works.[1]
420. Enchiridion; or, on Faith, Hope, and Love.
To the Enquiries of Januarius—2 books.
421. On the Care for the Dead.

This book was addressed to Paulinus. It contains one of the earliest authoritative statements of the belief in an intermediate state beween blessedness and damnation, and in the benefit to be gained from the prayers of the faithful by those in this condition.

On the Grace of the New Testament.
On the Divination of Demons.
On the Origin of the Soul, and a Text of James—2 books.
410. On the Soul and its Origin—4 books.
416. On the Trinity—15 books.

Augustine begins this book with the remark that it is difficult, and will be understood by few, in consequence of its highly speculative character.

429. On Heresies, to Quodvultdeus.

V. Moral and Ascetic.

390. On Lying.[2]
395. On Continence.
396. On the Christian Contest.
On Virginity.[3]
400. On the Work of Monks. A censure of idle and vagabond monks and relic-mongers.
401. On the Blessing of Marriage.
411. On consulting Demons.
414. On the Blessing of Widowhood.
419. On Adulterous Unions.[4]
420. Against Lying.

In these books Augustine shows himself superior to the general moral standpoint of his age by arguing against the view of the Priscillianists that

[1] In this work occurs the famous sentence, "Bona opera sequuntur justificatum, non praecedunt justificandum."

[2] He was not at all pleased with this book, and at one time tried to suppress it. "Obscurus et anfractuosus et omnino molestus mihi videbatur" (*Retractt.* i. 27).

[3] This treatise and those on analogous topics were partly written because, as Augustine says in his *Retractations* (ii. 22), some of the answers to Jovinian too much depreciated marriage. He evidently refers to Jerome. "Praeceptum Domini," he says, "de virginibus nullum est."

[4] He felt the question to be full of difficulty. Id. ii. 57.

a falsehood is not allowable under any circumstances, and not even to our worst enemies, or for a supposed good purpose.

396. On the Christian Warfare.
418. On Abstinence.
On Patience.

VI. Exegetic.

On Eighty-three Questions.
Questions of the Gospel—2 books.
393. On the Sermon on the Mount—2 books.
On Parts of the Epistle to the Romans.
394. On the Epistle to the Galatians.
397. On different Questions. To Simplicianus—2 books.
400. On the Agreement of the Evangelists—4 books.
401-405. On Genesis, taken literally—12 books.
410. On the Psalms.
On Job.
On Forms of Expression in the Scriptures—7 books.
Questions—7 books.
412. On the Spirit and the Letter.
416. On the Gospel of St. John—124 homilies. Begun 406.
417. Homilies on the First Epistle of St. John.

We have already had occasion to notice some of the characteristics of Augustine's exegesis. He held, but in a loose and elastic way, the doctrine of the "plenary inspiration" of Scripture, yet he points out that it was possible for the hermits to do without Scripture altogether, and says that when men are upheld by faith, hope, and charity, they only need Scripture for the instruction of others.[1]

VII. Sermons, *circ.* 400.

They are homilies, of which 183 are on passages of Scripture, 88 on Festivals, 69 on Saints, 23 on occasional subjects. Admirably adapted for their immediate purposes, often interesting, and never without some marks of the ability of the preacher, they are yet the least important division of Augustine's writings. "Many of them were published from the notes or shorthand reports of his hearers." They do not for a moment pretend to be great and deep orations like the masterpieces of the Greek Fathers, but are models of country sermons addressed to the middle classes and the poor of Hippo in a terse and simple style.

VIII. Autobiographical.

Letters. These are 270 in number, and are spread over a space of forty

[1] *De Doctr. Christ.* i. 39. See my *History of Interpretation*, pp. 236-239.

years. They furnish us with a vivid picture, both of Augustine himself and of the times in which he lived. They are addressed to bishops, clerics of all ranks, statesmen, ladies, and private friends, and they range over all the public and private events of his day. They abound in points of interest. For instance, in the 22d he begs the Bishop of Carthage to forbid the revels at wakes and at the tombs of the martyrs. Of the correspondence with Jerome I have already spoken. In the 38th he pleads for some allowance in ritual diversities. The 47th deals with justifiable homicides. The 53d gives the succession of the Bishops of Rome, from St. Peter to Anastasius. In the 54th he touches on a question now frequently discussed. He tells us that the Holy Communion was received fasting, yet that on the eve of Good Friday it was not so received, and he does not venture to lay down such a rule. The Church of England "has so ordered her services that the Holy Communion is commonly administered at noon," and Augustine says, "*Si quis die dominico jejunandum putaverit* non parvo scandalo erit Ecclesiae." His rule was, "Whatsoever cannot be shown to be contrary to the faith or to good morals is to be regarded as indifferent." The 55th is on the mysteries of numbers. The 60th on the character produced by monasticism. The 65th, 77th, and 78th are on criminous clerks. The 90th is on heaven and the heavenly life on earth. In the 93d Epistle occurs the sophistical plea of the Inquisition, "*Melius est cum severitate diligere* (?) quam cum lenitate decipere." In the 98th Epistle he repudiates the notion of any continuation or repetition of Christian sacrifice, in spite of the popular phrase, "the sacrifice of the altar," implying, as in his book against Faustus (xx. 18), that "in the oblation and participation of the Body of Christ, Christians *peracti sacrificii memoriam celebrant.*" In the 101st letter he confesses his ignorance of Hebrew. The 146th is memorable as being addressed "*domino dilectissimo et desideratissimo fratri*," namely to Pelagius! In the 149th he explains Col. ii. 18-23, and refers, as he rarely does, to the Greek text and its divergent readings. In the 157th he dwells on the lawfulness of divorce for fornication and infidelity, and severely reprobates the monastic *disparagements* of marriage. In the 159th he makes some remarks on the appearance of ghosts. In the 165th and 166th he shows his leaning to the doctrine of *traducianism* (as also in *Epp.* 180, 202), though he appeals to Jerome for his opinion, and says "*Doce me ut doceam.*" He also speaks of the punishment of infants dying unbaptized. In the 169th he speaks of Christ as the Rock on which the Church is built. The 189th is on the lawfulness of war. In the 197th and 199th, "On the End of the World," he expresses opinions which practically seem to exclude the doctrines of purgatory and prayers for the dead. The 204th is on suicide. The 209th on the appointment of a bishop suffragan. His choice of a monk named Antony was so unhappy that it caused him the acutest distress, and almost drove him to resign his see. Augustine superseded him, and wrote to Pope Caelestine not to accept his appeal. The 211th deals with the disorder of a sisterhood. The 213th is about the appointment of a successor. The 220th is a reproof to Count

Boniface. The 228th on flight in persecution. The last (221) is addressed to Count Darius, with a copy of his *Confessions.*[1]

387. Soliloquies.

400. Confessions—13 books.

Of this most remarkable and all but unique work I have already spoken. It has been better known in all ages and to all classes of readers than any other of his voluminous writings.

427. Retractationes—2 books.

This work also is of an unusual and interesting character. About the year 427, when Augustine had already reached the limit of old age, it occurred to him to revise his own books with something of a judicial severity. He had been a very prolific writer, and, thinking of the words of St. Paul, "If ye judged your own selves, ye should not be judged by the Lord,"[2] he admitted that he was afraid of the warnings against "every idle word,"[3] and also of the text: "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin."[4] He was well aware that from his many treatises many things could be collected, which, if not false, could yet certainly be proved to be unnecessary. He does not apply these remarks to his sermons.[5] He had begun to speak to the people while he was yet young, and had rarely been permitted to be silent on any public occasion. He therefore passes in review his principal works. In his books against the Academics he regrets that he has so often spoken of "fortune," and that he had used the word "omen," which he does not find in the sacred writings. He thinks, too, that he should not have praised Plato and his followers so highly, seeing that they were Pagans. In the dedication of his treatise *On a Happy Life* to Manlius Theodorus he had been too complimentary. In his book *On Order* he had attached too high an importance to a liberal education, since many who had no such education were great saints, and many who had greatly advanced in it were not saints at all. Also he should not have spoken of the Muses as though they were goddesses, nor have spoken of wonder as a vice, nor have spoken of the philosophers as illustrious for virtue, though they had not true piety. His book *On the Immortality of the Soul* was so brief and obscure that in some places he could not even understand it himself. As to others of his books he is obliged to enter into subtle, and not always very satisfactory, explanations to show that they cannot be quoted by the Pelagians in favour of their views about free-will. Yet, on the whole, the *Retractations* are a noble sacrifice laid on the altar of truth by a majestic intellect.

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[1] A further account of these and other letters is to be found in Bishop Wordsworth's *Church History*, iv. 34-69.

[2] 1 Cor. xi. 31. [3] Matt. xii. 36. [4] Prov. x. 19.

[5] On the design of the book, see *Ep.* cxliii. 2 (to Marcellinus).

XVIII

ST. CHRYSOSTOM

"The great clerk and godly preacher, St. John Chrysostom."
Homily i.

"Quest' altri fuochi tutti contemplanti
Uomini fuoro, accesi di quel caldo
Che fa nascer i fiori e i frutti santi."
DANTE, *Parad.* xxii.

SECTION I

YOUTH AND EARLY MANHOOD

(A.D. 347-370)

JOHN—who was as exclusively known to his contemporaries by that name as he is to us by his complimentary title of Chrysos-

EDITIONS OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM.

Savile, 8 vols. fol. Eton, 1612 (first complete edition); Fronto Ducaeus, 12 vols. fol. Paris, 1609-1633 and 1636 (completed by F. and C. Morel); Benedictine, 13 vols. fol. 1718-1738, reprinted at Venice, 1734, 1755, and Paris, 1834-1839, prepared by Bernard de Montfaucon; Migne, 13 vols. 8vo, Paris, 1860. Of separate works, the best editions of the Homilies on St. Matthew, and on the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Ephesians are those of the Rev. Canon Field (Cambridge, 1839, and Oxford, 1838, *sq.*)

THE CHIEF AUTHORITIES FOR THE LIFE OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM ARE—

The *Dialogue* of Palladius, Bishop of Helenopolis (possibly the author of the *Historia Lausiaca*); the ecclesiastical historians, Socrates (vi. 3-21), Sozomen (viii. 2-23), Theodoret (v. 27-31); a letter of Isidore of Pelusium, *Ep.* xlii.; the lives written by Erasmus (*Opp.* v. 1150), Tillemont (*Mém. Eccl.* xi. 1-405), and Montfaucon (*Opp.* xiii. 91-178); Butler (*Lives of the Saints*, Jan. 27); Cave (*Lives of the Fathers*, iii. 237); Neander, *Der heilige Chrysostomus*, third ed. Berlin, 1848; Am. Thierry, *St. Jean Chrysostome et l'impératrice Eudoxie*, second ed. Paris, 1874; W. R. Stephens, *Life of St. Chrysostom*, Lond. 1872; Böhringer, *Johann. Chrysostomus* (*Kirchengesch. in Biogr.* second ed. ix.) Among other works on St. Chrysostom, we may mention Th. Förster, *Chrysost.*

tom, or the "golden-mouthed"[1]—is one of the most splendid and interesting figures in the early history of the Church. Less profound a theologian than Athanasius, or Augustine, or Gregory of Nazianzus; less independent a thinker than Theodore of Mopsuestia; less learned than Origen or Jerome; less practically successful than Ambrose, he yet combines so many brilliant gifts that he stands almost supreme among the *Doctores Ecclesiae* as an orator, as an exegete, as a great moral reformer, as a saint and confessor who—

> "For the testimony of truth has borne
> Universal reproach, far worse to bear
> Than violence; for this was all his care
> To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
> Judged him perverse."

The general purity and practical wholesomeness of his doctrines, the loftiness of his moral standard, the indomitable courage of his testimony against the vices of all classes, the glory of his oratory, the prominent position which he occupied in his own generation, the tragedy and failure of his life, surround his name with a halo as bright as that of any of the great ecclesiastical leaders of the early centuries. He was the ideal preacher to the great capital of the world.

The life of Chrysostom falls into well-marked periods—his youth, his life as a hermit, his diaconate of six years, his priesthood of twelve years (A.D. 386-398) at Antioch, his episcopate of six years at Constantinople, and his three years' exile.

He was born at Antioch. Although the exact date of his birth is unknown, we may fix it with tolerable certainty about the year 347, a date which best accords with the known events of his career.[2] His father—Secundus—was an "*illustris*" and a "master of the soldiers," and had, therefore, attained to high military rank; but he had no influence on the training of his son, for he died while Chrysostom was yet a young child. His wife's name was Anthusa, and she too was of noble birth. She was little more than twenty years of age when her husband left her a widow with two children, of whom the daughter was

zu Semem Verhältniss zur antiochenischen Schule, Gotha, 1869; Villemain, *Tableau de l'éloquence chrétienne dans le quatrième siècle*, Paris, new ed. 1867.

[1] Proclus describes him as χρυσοῦς τὴν γλῶτταν, about A.D. 437. The name χρυσοστόμος was first used by Joannes Moschus about A.D. 630.

[2] Jerome was born about A.D. 347.

the elder. The position of a youthful widow of good means in a town so desperately profligate as Antioch was one of great difficulty and danger, and Anthusa keenly felt the responsibility of having to train her children, govern her household, restrain the turbulence of her slaves, and face the exactions of greedy tax-gatherers. Under such circumstances few widows would have refused the easy remedy of a second marriage, but Anthusa, with noble resolution, declined all offers, and faced all her difficulties. She devoted herself, heart and soul, to the care of her young children. The girl seems to have died early, for she is not again mentioned, but Anthusa saw in her boy the image of her husband, and sacrificed every other consideration for his sake. She must rank with Monnica, and Nonna, and Emmelia, with Gorgonia and Macrina, in the annals of Christian womanhood; but her task was more difficult than theirs. They had all adopted, to a greater or less degree, the ascetic ideal, but Anthusa lived in the world of Antioch though she was not of it. It was the story of her pure and noble life which wrung from Libanius the impassioned testimony, "*Heavens! what women these Christians have!*"[1]

She doubtless found other Christian ladies to support her by their countenance and example. From the days of Phoebe, deaconess of Cenchreae, and Priscilla, joint founder of the Church of Ephesus, and Lydia of Philippi, the cause of Christianity has owed a deep debt to the religious fervour and zealous activity of women-converts. Julian and Libanius found, to their cost, that women would remain true to their faith even when it was easy to break down the fidelity of men.[2]

Anthusa gave her son the best education in her power. He learnt philosophy from a certain Andragathias, and he owed his literary culture to Libanius, certainly the first Pagan orator and sophist of his day. Under Libanius he was trained in eloquence and in classical learning. He occasionally quotes from the greatest classic writers, but he seems to have felt no special fondness for them, and perhaps gained more from them as a stylist than as a thinker. He attained so brilliant a reputation by his progress in oratory that Libanius not only bestowed the warmest praise on his youthful *Panegyric on the Emperors*, but even gave him the palm over all his other pupils.[3] When asked

[1] Βαβαί, οἷαι παρὰ Χριστιανοῖς γυναῖκές εἰσι. Chrys. *ad vid. jun. Opp.* i. 340.
[2] Julian, *Misopogon*, p. 363.
[3] Isidore Pel. ii.; *Ep.* 42.

on his deathbed whom he would regard as most worthy to succeed him, he answered, "John, if the Christians had not stolen him from us." So remarkable a testimony speaks highly for the Christian influence of Anthusa. It is clear that, from his earliest childhood, she must have familiarised his mind with the Holy Scriptures, and must have instilled into him such sound doctrine as enabled him to withstand the glittering intellectual fascination of the refined and idealised Paganism which was taught in the most celebrated of the schools of rhetoric.

As yet, however, Chrysostom experienced no foreshadowings of the career which lay before him. So far from feeling any proclivities to the asceticism which was then regarded in Christian circles as the one "true philosophy," he began his career, like Basil the Great, as a public advocate. His gifts as an orator opened to him the prospect of the highest worldly success, and his early efforts were so universally admired that, if he had continued to practise at the bar, he would have won his way into the front rank of civil distinction. He was as yet unbaptized, for, though both his parents were Christians, they shared the common superstition which made it seem a peril and a disadvantage to be washed in the "laver of regeneration" until the feverish years of youth had passed. There was nothing, therefore, to restrain him from plunging, as many Christians did, into a worldly career. He was keenly desirous of admiration and applause, and, among other dangerous tendencies, felt a passionate enthusiasm for the loose relaxations of the theatre of Antioch.

From these perilous seductions he was saved by two influences —his study of Scripture, and his affection for a youthful friend.

It was probably the result of his mother's influence that even at this period of his life he continued to be a student of Holy Writ, so that—to use his own favourite metaphor—his soul was still watered from that pure fountain. What he learnt in those sacred pages soon made the life of a lawyer intolerable to him in a city which seethed with litigiousness and immorality.[1] The conscience of Chrysostom was not of that texture which made it as easy for him as it was for others to be content with a purely professional standard of truth and honour. Custom and conventionality were not sufficient in his eyes to sanction chicanery and greed.

His friend bore the common name of Basilius, and he only

[1] See Amm. Marc. xxx. 4.

emerges for a moment into the light of history at this brief period of the life of Chrysostom.[1] Basilius was emphatically the friend of his youth. They studied together, talked together, walked with each other to and from the lecture-rooms, and shared the inmost counsels of each other's hearts.[2] They remained inseparable until Basilius embraced the monastic life, which had often formed the topic of their youthful conversations. This step produced a deep effect on the mind of Chrysostom, already wearied with the artificiality of his profession. He could not indeed at once make up his mind to give up all and follow Christ in the manner demanded by the fervid impulse of his age, but the world became more and more distasteful to him, and he began to withdraw from public life and to spend more hours in devotional duties. His impressions were deepened by the beautiful character and pure moral teaching of the gentle Meletius, who in 367 returned from his second exile and resumed the duties of his see.[3] He was a man so dearly loved that, as Chrysostom mentions in a homily to his memory, men gave his name to their children, painted his portrait on their walls, and engraved it on their signet rings. Chrysostom was deeply impressed by the saintliness of this beloved prelate, and it is not impossible that he might have been baptized earlier if there had been a bishop of Antioch who could have won the confidence of his youth. He offered himself to Meletius as a catechumen, and after three years of training and probation he was baptized at the age of twenty-three, about A.D. 370.

His baptism was a culminating point in his career. It was practically a decision that he would devote his life exclusively to God's service. Shortly after he had been baptized the bishop appointed him a reader. It was the humblest of ecclesiastical dignities, and only entitled him to read the Scripture lessons from the ambo in the part of the service which preceded the Holy Communion; but it definitely engaged him in the service of the Church. His friend and biographer Palladius says that after his baptism he never again swore or told a falsehood, or uttered a calumny, or joined in loose conversation.

It was hardly likely that a youth of such a temperament as Chrysostom's, and in such a city as Antioch, should long remain

[1] *De Sacerd.* i. 4.
[2] For all these particulars, see Chrys. *De Sacerdot.* i. 1.
[3] See *supra*, i. 423; ii. 190, 191.

unattracted by the imaginative charm of the monastic life. It is in youth especially, and in the glow of early convictions, that such self-sacrifice has an infinite fascination. "It was thus that Massillon, in the first fervour of his faith, quitted the repose of the seminary for the austerities of La Trappe. It was thus that Fénelon in his youth was ambitious of the perilous task of missions in the East." He was drawn to asceticism all the more powerfully by the example of his friend Basilius, whose ardour was earlier than his own. The result of constant intercourse in their case, as in that of Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil the Great, was a plan that they should both abandon their homes and embrace "the true philosophy." Chrysostom's affection for the widowed mother to whom he owed so much does not seem to have ever occurred to him as an obstacle; or, if it did, he only regarded it as a temptation to be overcome. But when Anthusa heard of the plan she determined if possible to prevent a separation which would frustrate the whole joy and purpose of her life. Chrysostom himself describes the scene. She took him by the hand, led him into her private chamber, and bade him sit down near the bed in which he had been born. Then bursting into a flood of tears, and with her voice intercepted by groans, she reminded him of the early age at which she had been left husbandless; how perilous and trying was the position of a widow; how, nevertheless, she had borne all burdens and braved all risks, and devoted herself exclusively to the difficult task of educating her only son. Often might she have taken another husband, but amid the fiery furnace of her trials it was her sufficient consolation to gaze on the face of her child. Yet she had squandered nothing of his patrimony, but had paid out of her personal means the heavy expenses of his liberal education. She did not cast these benefits in his teeth, but only entreated him not to plunge her in a new and more painful widowhood, but to wait for her death before he entered on the ascetic seclusion. Were he to act otherwise, were he to defy the wishes and neglect the misery of his mother, would not God be angry with him? Nor could he pretend that she was tempting him from a religious life to worldly cares; on the contrary, she would give him the amplest opportunities for retirement and contemplation in his own home.[1]

Chrysostom was moved by these passionate entreaties. Nor

[1] *De Sacerd.* i. 5.

could he persuade himself to set them at naught, though Basilius urged him to do so. The young men, however, approached as nearly to the ideal which they had set before themselves as circumstances permitted. They placed themselves under the spiritual guidance of the great Diodorus of Tarsus, one of the chief founders of the sounder system of spiritual interpretation which is known as that of the "school of Antioch." Diodorus, a man of noble birth and great learning, was a friend of Meletius, and was at that time president of a monastery. He was an ascetic, and the Emperor Julian ridiculed the pale face, sunken cheeks, and emaciated frame of the great scholar as though they were a mark of the anger of the gods.[1] But his genius and high character combined with his self-mortification to win the confidence of Basilius and Chrysostom, and they were joined by two other students who, like themselves and their teacher, afterwards became bishops—Maximus, the future Bishop of Seleucia, and the celebrated Theodore of Mopsuestia. The youths formed themselves into a little religious community like those of the Moravians, the German Pietists, and the Methodists at Oxford in later days. Without being yet an actual monk, Chrysostom practised all the austerities of a monk in his own home, and, among other things, we are told that he, like Gregory of Nazianzus, maintained for long periods an almost unbroken silence to cure himself of the bad habit of detraction.

[1] Carterius (Socr. vi. 3), who seems to have been a sort of joint-abbot with Diodorus, is less known.

XVIII

Continued

CHRYSOSTOM AS AN ASCETIC AND A MONK

(A.D. 370-381)

"Dark cells, dim lamps,
A stone floor one may writhe on like a worm:
No mossy pillow blue with violets."

BROWNING, *Paracelsus.*

SECTION II

NOT even the immense weight of custom and the entire current of an age are always strong enough to overthrow the influence of love and nature. We have already seen that Gregory of Nyssa married, and was not weaned without a struggle to monastic celibacy. Theodore underwent a similar struggle. He fell in love with a maiden named Hermione and formed the purpose of marrying and entering into the ordinary life of the world. On hearing this, Chrysostom in a flame of zeal wrote him his celebrated letter "ad Theodorum lapsum." He argued with Theodore with the same impassioned enthusiasm as Jerome had infused into his letter to his friend Heliodorus. He speaks as if Theodore had been guilty of an immense crime, and urges him with the thought of heaven and hell, and stories of the repentance of those who had similarly fallen, and lessons of the vanity of life, and the danger of looking back after having put the hand to the plough.[1] The fervid appeal—so powerful in itself, though founded on principles which were to some extent erroneous—rings with the accent of sincerity. It is more

[1] Most writers of Church history—though Tillemont is an exception—identify this Theodore with the Bishop of Mopsuestia.

eloquent and less rhetorical than Jerome's letter. It produced the desired effect. Hermione was sacrificed, and Theodore lived to become a celibate bishop and to earn the glory of being one of the best exegetes of the ancient Church.[1]

In 370 Meletius was banished for the third time, and Diodorus bravely and gratuitously undertook the care of his discouraged and scattered flock. The approach of Valens, the Arian Emperor, made it desirable for the Catholics to appoint orthodox bishops. It was natural that they should cast their eyes on youths so fervent, blameless, and learned as Basilius and Chrysostom, who viewed with alarm the prospect of being seized and consecrated to the episcopal office against their will.[2] Sharing each other's thoughts in all things they talked the matter over, and Chrysostom secretly determined that his friend should be consecrated and not himself. To compass this end he did not hesitate to use fraud. He told Basilius that the matter was not immediately urgent, and that they could consult about it at some later time. Meanwhile, he promised him that whatever happened they would act together and share the same fate. He adopted this extraordinary course without the smallest twinge of conscience, because he held that Basilius was worthy of the dignity, but that he himself was unworthy. Accordingly, not long afterwards, when emissaries came from the electors to seize the two friends, Chrysostom effectually concealed himself and left his companion to be captured. Basilius resisted to the utmost, whereupon the delegates, adopting the same method of deceit, and with equal unconsciousness that their conduct was disgraceful, told Basilius that they were surprised at his holding out through pride, and making so violent an opposition when his much more tumultuous friend had meekly obeyed the behest of his fathers.

Basilius accordingly accepted the office, but when he learnt the truth he went to Chrysostom in deep emotion, and with bitter tears upbraided him for his treachery. His reproaches produced no effect whatever. Chrysostom simply indulged in a hearty laugh, seized his friend's right hand, embraced him, and thanked God that his little plot had succeeded!

[1] Among the Nestorians he was called "The Interpreter."

[2] Chrysostom was only a "reader," but Augustine made a reader Bishop of Fassula (*Ep.* cclxi.), and sometimes even laymen were raised to the most exalted primacies—as Ambrose to that of Milan, Eustathius to that of Caesarea in Cappadocia, and Nectarius to that of Constantinople.

In vain Basilius complained that such conduct had overwhelmed him with confusion, and that he hardly dared to look his acquaintances in the face. They criticised both his conduct and that of Chrysostom very unfavourably from many points of view, and he felt that he had a right to more loyalty and consideration than had been shown him. Chrysostom replied, without the least compunction, that deceit was sometimes justifiable in a good cause, and that victories won by intellectual stratagem are more creditable than those won by force. When Basilius naturally answered that he was not an enemy to be conquered in this way, Chrysostom proceeded to show that fraud was also exercised quite justifiably to friends, and that physicians had sometimes saved the lives of patients by deceiving them. Such devices ought not to be regarded as deceit, but as management (*οἰκονομία*); and that such "management" was sanctioned in Scripture, as for instance, by St. Paul when he circumcised Timothy, and fulfilled the ceremonies of the Mosaic law (Acts xxi. 26, xxvi. 3; Gal. ii. 2; Phil. iii. 6). Paul, he argued, was no more to be called a deceiver on this account than Phinehas to be called a homicide, though he shed blood, or Elijah, or Abraham, or Moses.[1] "It is often," he said, "necessary to deceive, and by this art to achieve great ends. By too great rigidity one may positively injure a friend."[2]

The young bishop more or less acquiesced in these weak, unworthy, and unscriptural views, because neither he nor Chrysostom at that time and in that branch of morals rose to a loftier height than the mass of their contemporaries in the Eastern Church. "Well, then," he asked, "tell me what advantage are we supposed to have derived from this management or wisdom of yours, or whatever you choose to call it."[3]

The answer to this very natural question is one of St. Chrysostom's finest books—that *On the Priesthood*. Between the priesthood and the episcopate he draws no marked line of distinction, but the office of a presbyter seems to be chiefly in his thoughts.[4] He draws a glowing and solemn picture of the grandeur, the duties,

[1] These loose views of the admissibility of "oeconomy" in dealing with truth are found also in *Hom.* vi. *in Col. ii.* 8.

[2] *De Sacerd.* i. 9.

[3] The date of this event is uncertain, but probably it was not *later* than A.D. 374.

[4] Bishop Wordsworth thinks, on the other hand, that the title might be better rendered *On the Episcopate*.

and the perils of the priestly office, which seems to him the most pre-eminent of all dignities. It requires a great soul, and he feels himself to be as wholly inadequate for it as his friend was consummately qualified. It was through no disrespect that he had evaded the mandate of the electors, nay, it was to save them from blame for appointing a mere raw youth (μειράκιον) like himself. So far from being actuated by pride and vainglory, such feelings would rather have influenced him to accept the function. But when he read about the dignity of priesthood in the Old Testament, and Christ's commission, "Feed my sheep," in the New, and felt the power of the office, and the awfulness of its functions, he had trembled as even Paul had done (2 Cor. xi. 3; 1 Cor. ii. 3), though he was "a man of the third heaven" (2 Cor. xii. 2). Priests were tempted to avarice and many sins; they needed the utmost wisdom, abstinence, self-control, prudence, and fortitude. How difficult was the due care and guidance of widows and virgins; how deep the need for exercising a wise judgment! What diligence was necessary! what eloquence! what learning! Then, after an interesting digression about the gifts of St. Paul, he speaks of the labour required for composing sermons; the liability of a bishop to false accusations; the extent to which such a man is exposed to envy; the danger of his becoming too fond of praise and popularity; the exceptional burden of his responsibility, both for others and for himself.[1] How could he, so inexperienced, so imperfect, face the requirement for so much purity, prudence, and virtue? How could he sustain the weight of such cares? The very thought of it had filled him with fear. Basilius replied, weeping, that Chrysostom had but deepened his anxieties and regrets by such a picture; but his friend encouraged him with a smile, kissed him on the head, and bade him feel perfect confidence in Christ, who had called him to that high office. For himself he felt sure that

[1] In speaking of the administration of the Holy Communion, he calls it "offering the tremendous sacrifice," and speaks of "the Lord Himself sacrificed and lying there, and the priest standing at the sacrifice, and the receivers reddened by the blood." Such language is entirely unscriptural, and its popular and rhetorical character does not accord with his more careful theological language on Heb. x. 9, where he says "*We do not offer another sacrifice, but we make a commemoration of a sacrifice*"; see Wordsworth, iv. 129. Theodoret, whose views agreed with those of Chrysostom, says, "The symbol is not only called body, but bread of life," and Chrysostom, in his letter to Caesarius (if that be genuine), says, "It is esteemed worthy to be called the Lord's body, although the nature of bread remains in it."

from this ministry Basil would acquire such confidence as one day to receive his imperilled friend into celestial habitations. Such is a rough outline of this remarkable book, but it must be read through to enjoy its power and brightness. Historically it proves both the immense development of the sacerdotal idea—for Chrysostom speaks of priests as wielding a power to bind and loose which had not even been granted to archangels, while at the same time he shows how many priests fell infinitely far short of the ideal. He describes them as shipwrecked on the sunken reefs of vainglory, flattering the great, laying themselves out to win the intriguing ecclesiastical influence of women, and putting into play all the enginery of subtle ambition, and yet, after all, exposing themselves to the peculiar virulence of jealous observance and envious attack. Interesting, too, is his picture of the dangers and difficulties which beset the preacher, whether he be famous or mediocre. He draws the general conclusion that the life of a monk in his blessed obscurity was far calmer and safer, especially for such an one as himself, who, in entering on a warfare in which there was no discharge, keenly felt his many infirmities, and, above all, his irritability, his impulsiveness, and his too keen susceptibility to the influences of praise and blame.

Of Basilius, strange to say, we hear no more. Chrysostom offered him all the help and counsel in his power, but his name is not again mentioned. He must have been very young when appointed to his bishopric, and the probability is that he died early. Chrysostom promised to visit him frequently, so that his see must have been near Antioch. Baronius conjectures that it was Raphanea.

In 373 Chrysostom had a narrow escape. It was in 372 that there occurred the wild outburst of panic about magical arts which disgraced and terrified the reign of Valens. It shows the morbid state of men's minds at that epoch, and is closely analogous to the persecution of witches in the days of Sprenger, and the madness of suspicion which marked the history of the Popish Plot. It was at Antioch that Pagan sorcery had endeavoured to divine the name of the successor of Valens, and that the magic ring was supposed to have vibrated till it touched in succession the letters ΘΕΟΔ. The meeting and its issue were whispered abroad. Theodorus, and others whose names began with the fatal letters, were put to death, though Theodosius, the actual

successor of Valens, escaped unnoticed in his secluded Spanish farm. The trade of the informer became hideously common, and to avoid the possibilities of torture and death, which unsupported accusation too often involved, many persons destroyed their whole libraries, lest the unconscious ownership of a single magic-book should plunge them and their families into ruin. It is believed that many of the great works of antiquity were lost or mutilated in consequence of this alarm. One youth was executed for having copied a book of incantations; another for using a love spell to win a lady's affections. A proconsul put an old woman to death because she had cured his daughter's fever by a crooning song. A philosopher was executed for ending a letter to his wife with the words, "Take care to crown the gate with flowers," as though some great event was expected; and a young man, for trying to cure himself of a stomach-ache by muttering the vowels of the Greek alphabet. The paroxysm of alarm was at once grotesque and horrible.[1] While it was at its worst, and the city was full of spies and soldiers, Chrysostom was walking with a friend along the banks of the Orontes to the Church of the Martyr Babylas. Noticing the white fragments of some book floating down the river, they had the curiosity to fish it out, and then saw with horror that it was covered with magic formulae, and that a soldier was close at hand. Fearing that they had fallen victims to the trap of an informer, they hastily flung the book back into the river. Their agonised apprehensions were not fulfilled, but years afterwards, in his *Homilies on the Acts*, Chrysostom heartily thanks God for this great deliverance.[2]

It must have been very soon afterwards that Chrysostom carried out his long-cherished intention of becoming a monk. Whether Anthusa was now dead, or whether she was unable any longer to resist the impetuous torrent of her son's convictions we do not know, for Chrysostom never mentions her again.

No doubt the impulse to escape from the world was strengthened in him as in many others by the deplorable condition of the Empire, but it had its origin in the invincible Dualism of the Eastern temperament. The Essenes and the Therapeutae were ascetics, and from early Christian days men had lived the ascetic life without abandoning their homes. But when persecution after persecution rendered the condition of cities more and more

[1] Amm. Marc. xxix. 2, 22-28. [2] *Hom.* 38 *in Act. Apost. ad fin.*

wretched, the tendency to eremitism was confirmed by the legendary stories of Antony and Paul, and such stories also gave an impulse to the wiser coenobitism which was organised by Pachomius. The rules of Pachomius were introduced by Hilarion into Syria, and the visit of Athanasius and his two monks to Rome introduced the monastic system into the West, whence it was subsequently extended by Cassian into southern France. Chrysostom shared the admiration of his age for the tendency which in his opinion had made the Egyptian desert—studded with its monastic lauras—more beautiful than the midnight sky with its unnumbered stars. On the wooded hills which surrounded Antioch he saw the city of the virtues, the tabernacles of the saints.

The monastery over which Diodorus of Tarsus presided was of the Pachomian type, and Chrysostom joined it. The life practised by the monks was one of extreme simplicity, self-denial, toil, chanting of psalms, and prayer. The monasteries were situated on the healthy mountain heights of Silpius and Casius, which poured down into the city their multitudes of springs. Here, in his garment of skin and hair over a linen tunic, Chrysostom devoted six years to study, labour, fasting, and contemplation, having chosen an aged monk named Syrus as his trainer in ascetic practices.

He was happy, for he was living up to his own ideal. He found the peace of his monastery angelic when compared to the tumultuous and disordered life of Antioch. His letters to Demetrius and Stelechius were the first fruits of his retirement, and they powerfully delineate the blessedness which was to be found in seclusion as compared with life in a world where already much of the Christianity had become purely nominal, and where every one of the ten commandments, while professedly honoured in the letter, was grievously broken in the spirit. The letter to Demetrius dwells mainly on the shame and misery of the world, that to Stelechius on the exalted joy of the ascetic life.

Still more important was his work against the oppugners of monasticism called forth by the decree of Valens against the immunities of the monks. There can be no doubt that while many of the monks were sincere and holy men, large numbers of them were exceptionally bad. They had adopted monasticism from base motives of ambition, and they abused it for the vile ends of self-interest. Through them the whole system incurred

the just hatred of the majority. To Pagans they were specially detestable as the representatives of all that was insolent and ruffianly in ignorant superstition; worldly Christians felt even for sincere monks the aversion always kindled by the tacit reproach of a self-denying example; fathers and mothers disliked and dreaded the intrigues by which they insinuated themselves into the confidence of families; statesmen and governors saw the force of the Empire perilously denuded by countless throngs of religious idlers. The decree of Valens, which was provoked by the inherent evils and abuses of the system, called forth a chaos of hatreds, and in many places the monks were actually persecuted. Such conduct inspired Chrysostom, then in the early fervour of his noviciate, with extreme horror, and he once more contrasted the wickedness and turbulence of cities with the holy repose of those who had given up the world. He appeals especially to parents, and points out to them alike the perils which their sons encountered in the life of the world, and the influence which they might gain by becoming monks. Was worldly success to be placed in the balance against moral ruin?

Like all Chrysostom's works, the book derives its chief charm from the characteristics of illustration, eloquence, and sincerity. Experience of monasticism had as yet not brought to him any disillusion. He had deliberately placed himself under the spiritual guidance of Syrus because his mortifications were more severe than even those of his brethren. He lived mainly on bread and water, devoting his whole time to deep study and the duties of devotion. Not content with this, at the end of four years he withdrew to one of the mountain caves, and exchanged the life of a community for the solitude of the hermit. For two years longer he endured the unnatural privations of this condition. After that his health hopelessly broke down. The only chance of prolonging his life lay in his return to his home in Antioch. Whatever may have been his inward reluctance, he did not feel justified in continuing a self-mortification which had become equivalent to suicide. His friend Stagirius was in even a worse case. Falling a victim to "the satiety of penitence," he showed all the epileptic symptoms of a disordered frame and a haunted imagination, which were regarded as the signs of demoniacal possession. Chrysostom wrote to console and encourage him. He bids him visit the prisons and lazar-houses, and there to take note that his excess of sorrow was but the wantonness of melan-

choly, and that by suppressing it he would disarm the demon. These frequent proofs of the revolt of nature against the violation of her sweet and simple laws had no effect in weakening his enthusiasm. What happened to the miserable Stagirius we do not know, but Chrysostom almost congratulates him on an affliction which he attributed to the energy of his struggles against the assaults of sin.

As for Chrysostom himself, he carried, indeed, out of his six years of monastic and hermit life, a burning conviction of the reality of things unseen, an unrivalled knowledge of Scripture, and a clear insight into the workings of the human heart; but he carried away also the physical disaster of broken health, the anguish of incessant dyspepsia, the intellectual disadvantage of deficient practical experience in dealing with men. He emerged from his cavern solitude with manners, habits, and views of life which were little suited to the high station he was destined to fill. These results were in no small degree the cause of the ruin and misery which marked the external fortunes of his future life. Nevertheless, sincerity and self-denial never miss their high reward. Solitude, if it often ended in hypochondria, was also "the mother of great thoughts." From the depths of the wilderness issued forth strong saints as well as hopeless maniacs. Doubtless, from the standpoint of a higher existence, St. Chrysostom would have considered that his losses were more than compensated by his spiritual gains, and the experiences of his early manhood, whatever may have been the pains and trials which resulted from them, would not have diminished the fervour with which he was at last able to exclaim Δόξα τῷ Θεῷ πάντων ἕνεκα—"Glory to God for *all* things."

Yet on the subject of monasticism and celibacy the enthusiastic ardour of his youth was abated by the wisdom of a larger experience. He deplored in later days the deep cleft between the conceptions of a religious and a secular life, as though the monks and hermits only were "the religious," and as though an altogether lower and poorer standard of Christianity sufficed for the remainder of mankind.

XVIII

Continued

CHRYSOSTOM AT ANTIOCH

(A.D. 381-398)

"Phoebeae lauri domus Antiochia
Turbida . . . et amentis populi male sana tumultu."
AUSON. *Ord. Nob. Urb.*

SECTION III

CHRYSOSTOM was now thirty-five, and in A.D. 381 was admitted by Meletius into the order of deacons. The post was humble, its functions mostly mechanical. Deacons were sacrists and subordinate attendants in the sanctuary. Their highest office was, on rare occasions, to read the Gospel and to baptize, while their ordinary duty was to take charge of the church, its property, and the order of the services, and to take their stand by the chair of the priest or bishop in order to do his bidding.[1] But outside the church the deacons discharged the important and honourable duty of searching out, visiting, and relieving the poor; and some at least of the extraordinary popularity of Chrysostom with the multitudes at Antioch may have been due to his assiduity in this blessed ministry. The years of preparation for his career had been long; they had occupied a longer period than that destined to be spent in actual service. But that work influenced the future religious history of the world.

Antioch was in those days one of the loveliest, stateliest, most magnificent, and most voluptuous cities of the Eastern Empire, and it displayed to the full the two disastrous characteristics of other great cities in the glaring contrasts between splendid wealth

[1] See Neander's *Chrysostom*, pp. 59-71.

and abject poverty, and in the co-existence of professed Christianity with entire frivolity and unbridled vice.[1] From his work as a deacon Chrysostom derived an ever-deepening impression of the misery of the world, and his epitaph on all its ambitions is written in his solemn and beautiful *Letter to a Young Widow*, whose husband Therasius had died five years after her marriage.[2] In this treatise he alludes to the recent and awful death of Valens (A.D. 378), and shows the impression left by the rout of Adrianople on the minds of all men. Few passages of this letter are more interesting than that in which he points out, as was also done by St. Ambrose and others, the fact that the fourth century was one of great calamities; those calamities were even wider and more terrible than he depicts. The superhuman exaltation of the Emperors was nothing but a dizzy precipice. Glancing through the century, we see that among Constantine's predecessors Diocletian, after finding that cabbage-growing at Salona caused a happiness unknown to the purple, died perhaps by suicide; Maxentius was drowned by the weight of his armour in the muddy waves of the Tiber at the battle of the Milvian Bridge; Licinius, in violation of a solemn promise, was executed by his conqueror. Constantine, indeed, died in his bed, but not till he had imbrued his hands in the blood of his eldest son. Constantius inaugurated his reign by a general massacre of the seed-royal, and died while hurrying to suppress the revolt of Julian. Constantius II. perished in the attempt to invade the domain of his brother Constans. Constans was murdered by his soldiers. Gallus was beheaded by Constantius. Julian, at thirty-seven, died in disastrous failure, perhaps by the arrow of one of his own soldiers; his successor Jovian, at thirty-two, after a reign of only eight months, was suffocated by the fumes of a brazier in a cold half-finished house. Valentinian I. died in a burst of fury at an imaginary insult; his brother Valens was burnt to death in the terrific rout at Adrianople; of his sons—Gratian was murdered by his own guards at twenty-four, and Valentinian II., at the age of twenty, was found dead on

[1] Julian (*ap.* Liban. i. 469 ed. Reiske) describes it as "full of all vices, violence, drunkenness, incontinence, impiety, avarice, and imprudence." We see what the city was in Chrysostom's *Homilies on the Statues*, and in Julian's *Misopogon;* comp. Renan, *Les Apôtres*, i. xii. The Christians constituted about half the population; the rest were Jews and Pagans. For some account of the Antioch of the first century, see my *Life of St. Paul*, i. 288-296.

[2] It is supplemented by the treatise *Against renewing Marriage*.

the banks of the Rhone. The widows of some of these imperial personages died by poison, or of despair, or of broken hearts. The fate of the many usurpers and military leaders had been similarly disastrous. Nepotian, Sylvanus, Eugenius, Procopius, Maximus, Andragathius, Gaïnas, Arbogast, all came to untimely ends; and the powerful ministers Rufinus, Eutropius, Olympius, Aetius, Stilicho, Bonifacius, fared no better. Ammianus says that in those days the very vultures were accustomed to be fed on corpses.[1] Two Emperors only of the whole epoch—Constantine and Theodosius—died in their beds in peace. Vanity of vanities was written large over the entire annals of the epoch; and Chrysostom points the moral with powerful effect.[2]

Like other great Fathers he too wrote *On Virginity*. On this subject he shared the errors of his age. Neither he nor his contemporaries saw with perfect clearness that there is no question of superiority or inferiority in the virgin or wedded state; that marriage is God's appointed ordinance for the vast majority of mankind, in accordance with His own eternal laws; that there is not the slightest inherent merit either in celibacy or in marriage in themselves, but only as either condition is accepted in obedience to God's commands. Chrysostom speaks less unguardedly than Jerome; but he too writes from that inferior estimate of both womanhood and of matrimony which was the almost inevitable result of the imperfect institutions of the East. His pictures of the little trials and difficulties of the marriage state are, like those of Gregory of Nyssa, generally exaggerated and sometimes absurd. Tertullian was nearer the mark when he spoke of marriage as a condition singularly blessed by the love of God.

To this period of his life belongs also his work *On the Martyr Babylas*. Babylas, Bishop of Antioch, had been put to death about A.D. 250, in the Decian persecution,[3] and by the order of

[1] "Dirae volucres . . . assuetae illo tempore cadaveribus pasci." On some of these disasters, see *supra*, p. 131.

[2] In the morbid state of superstition induced by uncertainties and catastrophes, people seized eagerly on omens. It was thought an omen of the fate of Valens that a street oath at Antioch was "May Valens be burnt alive if I stand this," and that "Bring wood, bring wood, to heat the baths of Valens" was a common cry.

[3] According to Eusebius (*H. E.* vi. 39) he died in prison. In forcing the Emperor Philip to do penance for the murder of Gordian before he could be readmitted into Church communion, Babylas (if the story be true) had anticipated the courage of Ambrose (id. vi. 34).

Gallus his remains had been transferred to that famous grove of Daphne-by-Orontes in 351. From that time forth the oracle was dumb, and in 362 Julian received the answer that this was due to the proximity of the martyr's corpse. Julian therefore ordered the groves to be cleared of all dead bodies,[1] and the Christians who obeyed his commands carried the remains of the martyr to a church in Antioch, chanting fierce psalms in denunciation of idolatry. On the same night the temple and idol perished in a conflagration caused by lightning, and Julian in revenge closed the great church of Antioch. The untouched martyr-chapel stood by the ruined and blackened idol-shrine. Libanius had written a lamentable oration on the catastrophe, which Chrysostom holds up to unsparing scorn.

These writings abundantly proved that Chrysostom possessed great powers of oratory. Hitherto as a deacon he had not preached, but there must have been many who knew his brilliant reputation in the school of Libanius, and his early fame at the bar. He had now attained the ripe age of forty, and in 386, after a diaconate of six years, he was ordained a priest by Flavian, who—in spite, it is said, of a distinct oath to the contrary—had accepted the bishopric, and thus perpetuated the unhappy schism. Chrysostom's inaugural discourse has come down to us, and although it doubtless suited the taste of an age which expended boundless admiration on the sophists, and compared their style to "a mosaic of gold," or "a stream of gems," or "the purple robe and girdle of Hera," it is to most modern readers an unworthy specimen of his genius. He protests and flatters too much, and when we have subtracted from his sermon both the depreciation of himself as "a cheap and abject youth,"[2] and the eulogies of Flavian spoken to his face, there is not much left that is profitable for edification. Fortunately this was a style which he hardly ever adopted after this occasion.

It was the wise plan of the ancient Church to adapt a man's work in all possible cases to his abilities. The rulers of the Church of Antioch at once recognised that in Chrysostom they possessed an orator of the highest calibre. They therefore made preaching his chief function, reserving the other duties of the pastorate—equally or more blessed, but requiring the possession of other gifts—to those who were less capable of reaching the ears and hearts of the multitude. For twelve years Chrysostom

[1] Amm. Marc. xxii. 13. [2] μειρακίσκος εὐτελὴς καὶ ἀπερριμένος.

was mainly working as a preacher at Antioch.[1] The 200,000 inhabitants of this regenerate "Athens of the East" heard a call to repentance more powerful than had been heard since the death of the Apostles.

An immense number of his sermons and homilies have come down to us, and they place him in the forefront of Christian orators and Christian exegetes. The greater part of them belong to this period of his life. Besides his funeral orations, of which the one pronounced on Meletius is a specimen, his sermons chiefly fall under the two divisions of theological and practical. The theological discourses against Pagans,[2] against the Jews,[3] and against the various sects of Arians, were necessitated by the heresies to which his people were tempted to succumb. They are characterised especially by their orthodoxy and the profound acquaintance with Scripture, which was the preacher's most irresistible weapon. His practical discourses are incomparable specimens of the manner in which he fulfilled his duty as a prophet and a moral teacher by boldly rebuking vice. The vivid style and direct method of Chrysostom enable us to form a clear picture of the temptations which assailed Christians at a time when many were still wavering between two opinions, and were guided to a large extent by political considerations in the choice of their nominal faith. Professed believers were as anxious in those days as at all times to effect a convenient working compromise between the Church and the world. They thronged to hear the splendid oratory which awoke their admiration even when it did not touch their hearts, but they absented themselves from the prayers and turned their backs systematically upon the Holy Communion. They listened so intently that the pickpockets were able to ply a busy trade among them,[4] but they forgot the practical application of what they heard.[5] They broke out into tumults of applause,[6] but what they admired was

[1] *Hom.* xi. *in Act. Apol. ad fin.*

[2] Chrysostom had no need to argue at great length against Pagans. Their weak and dying cause had been still further crippled by the repressive edicts of Theodosius in 381, 385, and 392. Even the two chief apologists of Paganism, Symmachus in the West and Libanius in the East, were only aesthetic Pagans—Pagans on national and classical grounds.

[3] The Jews of Antioch seem to have been of a very low class; and Chrysostom deals with them in language of the extremest severity.

[4] *Adv. Arianos Hom.* iii. 7, *Hom.* iv. 6.

[5] *Hom.* iv. *ad fin.*, *Hom.* xvii. *in Matt.*, *Hom.* xxxi. *in Acts.*

[6] See Suicer, s. v. κρότος, and Bingham, *Antiq.*

the rhetoric, not the spiritual truth which it was intended to convey. To less gifted preachers they were far less attentive. Some Christians, as we learn from Origen, only attended church on feast-days, and not always then. Some left before the sermon, or remained in knots at the farther end of the sacred building, which was assigned to the heathen and the unbaptized. Turning their backs on the Word of God, they busied themselves with secular gossip. Women, he says, were specially troublesome, making such a noise with their chattering about their children, their wool-work, and their domestic affairs, that he was sometimes barely able to collect his thoughts.[1] Chrysostom also has much to complain of. His hearers would adjourn from the church to sit side by side with Jews, Pagans, and heretics amid the fierce excitements of the circus, and at the immoral shows of the theatre. They believed in ridiculous omens; they adopted heathenish ceremonies; they consulted magic books; they came to the Eucharist only two or three times in the year at the great festivals, and after pushing and jostling each other to get first to the Holy Table, they hurried out before the final blessing. They made even the beginning of the New Year and Christmas Day —a feast of which the observance had only recently become popular—an excuse for all kinds of intemperance and excess. Among the mongrel population of Greeks, Orientals, Jews, Pagans, heretics, and only nominal Christians, of whom the population of Antioch was composed, the task of Chrysostom was one of severe labour and immense responsibility. The Christians alone numbered 100,000 souls, and of these he was the main teacher in the most important church of the city. No man could have discharged this great duty with more power and faithfulness, and probably his ten years as the Savonarola of Antioch were the happiest and most fruitful of his life.

It is interesting to know that he usually preached twice a week, though sometimes oftener. Being short of stature, he addressed the congregation from an ambo, not from the steps of the sacrarium. He rarely trusted to the inspiration of the moment, nor did he ever flatter himself that he could do without careful preparation. Sometimes, perhaps, he read his sermons.[2]

Great as he was, Theodosius—like all the Emperors—was compelled to pay court to the army by donatives on special

[1] Orig. *in Exod. Hom.* xiii. 3; *Philokal.* i. 8; Redepenning, ii. 229.
[2] Montfaucon, t. xiii. 99, 128; Wordsworth, iv. 130.

occasions, and these donatives absorbed enormous sums of money from an exhausted exchequer. In order to avoid the claim for *two* donatives, he resolved to combine the celebration of the fifth year of the nominal reign of his son Arcadius with that of his own tenth year on the throne; but to raise the requisite sum of money he was obliged to levy a subsidy from the wealthiest cities of the East—especially from Alexandria and Antioch. Both cities were violently hostile to the claim. At Alexandria the incipient revolt was quelled by the firmness of the Praefect Cynegius. At Antioch the Emperor's edict was proclaimed on Feb. 26, 387, and the sullen silence with which it was listened to was soon broken by the wail of women who declared that the city would be ruined. As Bishop Flavian was absent from his home, the mob, finding themselves unable to appeal for his intercession with the Emperor, surrounded the praetorium of the governor, and then, at the instigation of those "lewd fellows of the baser sort" who form the scum of crowds, they rushed to the great public baths and aimlessly wrecked them. Thence they returned to the praetorium, and it was only by escaping through a back door that the governor got beyond the reach of their fury. Bursting into the judgment-hall, they were for a moment awed into silence by the statues of Theodosius and the imperial family by which the empty tribunal was surrounded. The spell was broken by some wanton boy who flung a stone which struck one of the statues. Instantly the mob, goading themselves to fury, rushed upon the images, hurled them from their pedestals, battered their faces, and finally, with the grossest insults, broke them to pieces and dragged them through the mire of the streets. They then attacked the equestrian statue of Count Theodosius, the father of the Emperor, the brave defender of the Empire, who had fallen a victim to the ungrateful jealousy of Valentinian I. They hacked his statue to pieces amid derisive gibes. They were proceeding to fire the city, and the three hours' sedition would have ended in irreparable catastrophe, when the return of the governor with a single company of archers made them fly to their homes. Remorse, anguish, and terror succeeded the wild outburst, which, beginning in aimless petulance, had ended in senseless fury.[1]

[1] We have abundant authorities for this tumult, both Pagan and Christian: Liban. *Orat.* xii. p. 395; xxi. p. 527; Zosim. iv. 41; Theodoret, vii. 20; Sozom. vii. 23.

They could expect no mercy, and were compelled to await in awful suspense the weight of a punishment which might be signal beyond all precedent. There was not another city in the Empire which would sympathise with them, for the supreme and deified autocracy of the Emperors was the sole bond of union, the sole element of peace and order, throughout the world. They had violated the most sacred majesty which the world had ever reverenced. Theodosius was known indeed to be just and generous, though he was liable to stormy gusts of passion. Had the insult been dealt to him only it might have been just possible that, in some genial mood, he would make comparatively light of the offence, as the great Constantine had done, who, on being told that the mob of Alexandria had pelted his statues, raised his hand to his head, and replied with a smile, "Strange that I do not feel hurt!" But what the Emperor might forgive if it had only been directed against his own person became in his eyes an offence peculiarly detestable, when it had been directed against the sweet and holy Empress whom he had so tenderly loved and so recently lost,[1] and against the noble father whose deliverance of the Empire from peril had been rewarded only by his death. The Antiochenes might be doomed to decimation and destruction; the loss of all their privileges and the exaction of a crushing burden was the least that they could expect. And it was only too possible that Theodosius, listening to his more passionate advisers, might condemn the whole city to conflagration, and order the plough to be driven over its remains.

There was but one authority which could possibly afford them any shadow of protection—it was that of the Church. Her bishops had often thrown over the helpless the aegis of a Divine protection, and perhaps the Emperor, even in his angriest moments, could hardly refuse at least to *listen* to the intercession of the venerable Flavian. It was in truth no light task for an old man to travel 800 miles in the winter from Antioch to Constantinople, to leave behind him a dying sister, and to delegate to other hands the pressing duties of Lent; but Flavian and the Christians alike felt that in such a case "mercy is better than sacrifice." The messengers who bore to the Emperor the dreadful tidings of the sedition had fortunately been detained by a fall of snow which blocked the passes of Mount Taurus; even

[1] Flaccilla—that "*fidelis anima Deo*," as Ambrose calls her (*De obit. Theodos.* 40)—had died on Sept. 14, 385.

now, if Flavian travelled with unbroken speed on his momentous mission, he might be able to overtake them, and to prevent the Emperor from passing some terrible edict in the first transports of his just indignation.

Many days must elapse before the city could be relieved from the agony of its suspense, and it fell to Chrysostom to utilise the occasion, to deepen the religious impressions of that solemn moment, to uplift and to console. His flock needed the exertion of all his powers, for already, before the news could reach the Emperor, the governor and his magistrates were beginning to inflict terrible vengeance on the ringleaders, and on all who were charged with direct complicity in the riot. If Chrysostom's words are to be taken literally, even boys were burnt or flung to the wild beasts. But meanwhile, day after day, from the ambo or the altar stairs, the great preacher, in orations full of the highest dramatic power, was playing on the emotions of the multitude as on the strings of a harp, now elevating them to fortitude and resignation, now kindling their earthly hopes by describing the motives which might move the Emperor to clemency, now awakening the heavenly aspirations in which alone their souls could find permanent repose; and above all, warning them to renounce the greed and luxury, the hypocrisy and immorality, the cruelty and superstition, which had perhaps brought this judgment upon them.[1] Never perhaps was any Lent kept with deeper solemnity than that observed by the Christians of Antioch in the year 387, when the danger of death by the hands of the executioner hung over many of them, and the fear of ruin over all. The preacher's impassioned appeals often woke applause, but this he endeavoured to repress. The people thronged to the Church of the Apostles. Chrysostom made a glorious use of his opportunity. The tension of the audience is illustrated by the fact that a panic one day arose at the false news that the troops were entering the city, and the wild alarm of the Christian congregation had, to their shame and the indignation of Chrysostom, to be allayed by the Pagan governor.

In this way some twenty-two days had elapsed when the

[1] Chrysostom's most frequent denunciations are directed against the strange passion of the Antiochenes for rash oaths. Other vices were their shameful inhumanity towards slaves and their fondness for amulets, both Pagan and Christian.

imperial commissioners, Hellebichus and Caesarius, entered the city at the head of their troops. The selection of such officers had in it an element of hope, for they were Christians and men of compassion. They entered the weeping city in deep silence, while the multitude uplifted to them their supplicating hands. They announced at once that henceforth Laodicea was to supersede Antioch in the rank of capital of Syria; that all the baths, circuses, theatres, and places of amusement, were to be closed, and that judicial proceedings were to begin the next day. The wives and children of the accused, in squalid robes, weeping, and sprinkled with ashes, stood in groups about the court. The advocates all shrunk from the duty of defence. Libanius alone ventured to appear, and Caesarius, who knew him, whispered a few words of comfort in his ear.[1]

The next morning saw a memorable scene. As the two commissioners were riding to the court, a ragged and dwarfish old man seized the bridle of one of their horses and ordered them to dismount. At first they took him for a maniac, and on being informed that he was a hermit named Macedonius, the Barley-eater, they alighted, fell on their knees, and begged his blessing. "Go to the Emperor," said the undaunted old man—whose courage Chrysostom triumphantly contrasts with the cowardly flight of the Pagan cynics—"and tell him that man was created in the image of God. Statues that have been destroyed can be replaced, but he cannot restore so much as a single hair of those whom he puts to death."[2] Nothing can more strongly illustrate the strength of the influence exercised by the hermits than the fact that their intercession alone was sufficient to induce the commissioners to postpone the execution of their edict till the result of the appeal to the Emperor was known. Caesarius himself, leaving his colleague in Antioch, undertook to convey to Theodosius the letter signed by the hermits, in which they professed their readiness to ransom the guilty city if need be by their own lives. Chrysostom meanwhile did not relax his vigilance. He reproved the citizens for womanish lamentations over the lost privileges and curtailed pleasures of Antioch, when they ought rather to have been grateful for having escaped more deadly calamities. He pointed out to them the early Christian memories and traditions which constituted the true glory of their city, and showed them that by purity, integrity, and self-denial

[1] Liban. *Orat.* xxi. [2] Theodor. v. 20.

they might invest it with a pre-eminence which could neither be surpassed nor taken away.

Caesarius travelled to Constantinople with such zealous speed that he traversed the 800 miles in a week, but meanwhile Flavian had preceded him. Chrysostom himself has described to us, no doubt with rhetorical amplitude, yet with general accuracy, the interview between the Emperor and the Patriarch. When admitted into the imperial presence the aged bishop stood afar off, weeping, bending low, and covering his face with his hands. He listened with streaming tears to the complaint of Theodosius about the ingratitude of the Antiochenes to one who had always treated them with lenity, and to his denunciation of the brutal levity which they had shown in insulting the statues of his father and his wife. Flavian in reply did not attempt to extenuate the offence, but appealed to the Emperor's pity, dwelt on the glory of forgiveness, and entreated him to raise in the hearts of the people a memorial of gratitude which would be more enduring than any statues. He recalled to his memory the clement words of the great Constantine on a similar occasion, and his own noble acts of kindness. He reminded him how, at a former Easter-tide, in proclaiming an amnesty to criminals and prisoners, he had regretted that he had no power to re-awaken the dead, and how he might do so now by sparing those who were at the point to die. He appealed to him to illustrate in his own person the beneficence of Christianity, and to extend to his fellow-men the forgiveness which he himself daily implored from God. He declared lastly that unless the Emperor pardoned Antioch he himself would never return to the city.[1]

The naturally kind heart of Theodosius could not resist these appeals. The first outburst of his indignation had already expended itself. He reminded himself of the compassion of Christ, accorded to the city a free pardon, and begged Flavian to hasten back with the message of mercy. The bishop requested that the young Prince Arcadius might be allowed to accompany him, the better to assure the people that they were forgiven. This petition was refused, but Theodosius promised that when his military duties had been brought to a happy ending by the prayers of Christians he would visit the city in person.

The courier who preceded Flavian woke Antioch from its

[1] *Hom.* xxi. 1-4. No doubt the speech put into the mouth of Flavian by Chrysostom is in the main dramatic.

stupor of anguish and suspense. The bishop arrived soon afterwards in time for the Easter festivities. He was received with a burst of festal joy. The whole city was bright with garlands and torches, and seldom has there been a happier assemblage than the vast multitude to whom Chrysostom poured forth on Easter Day his paean of thanksgiving. The whole memorable episode redounded to the glory of Christianity. None had done more to save Antioch than Maximus and his brother-hermits, than Flavian and his brother-ecclesiastics. No one had consoled and animated and uplifted the citizens in their hour of despair but Chrysostom. No power but that of the Church of Christ could have appealed effectually to the Emperor for the forgiveness of a crime which was among the darkest in the annals of sedition. If the Emperor had controlled his natural indignation, in spite of having been wounded in his deepest sensibilities, it was because he was a sincere Christian. We are not surprised to hear that many Pagans were struck with these facts, and that having been attracted to the churches during the time that the baths and theatres and circuses were shut, they had been deeply influenced by the noble reasoning and the impassioned exhortation of the greatest of Christian preachers. Chrysostom, on the return of Flavian, had to face the heavy labour of preparing for baptism an unwonted number who offered themselves as catechumens.

For ten years more, after the stirring scenes in which the light of Chrysostom's genius had shone forth with such meridian splendour, he continued his blessed work in the great city. To this period of happy activity belong his ninety homilies on St. Matthew which contain his best expository work; his eighty-eight on St. John; and those on the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, Corinthians, Ephesians, Timothy, and Titus. They occupy from the seventh to the eleventh volumes of his works, which also contain the inferior homilies on Acts and Hebrews delivered at Constantinople. They show an incomparable industry, and a deep practical insight into the doctrines and precepts of Christianity. It would be difficult to produce anything to equal them from the works of any Father, and they form the staple of the *Catenae* of Theophylact, Œcumenius, and others, which served in lieu of original commentaries. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth volumes of his works are contained the homilies on parts of the Old Testament—Genesis, the Psalms,

and Isaiah,—most of which were also delivered at Antioch, though the latter were written before he was ordained priest.

In the Life of St. Ambrose we have watched some of the events which took place during those ten years.

"Res incompositas, fateor, tumidasque reliqui,"

is the confession which Claudian puts into the mouth of the shade of Theodosius,[1] and neither the somnolent Arcadius nor the small-minded Honorius was at all capable of bearing the immense weight of empire. Arcadius was first ruled by Rufinus and then by Eutropius; Honorius first by Stilicho, then by Olympius and Eusebius. These ministers suffered the miserable fate which befel nearly all who clomb in those troubled days to the "dread summits of Caesarean power." Rufinus was murdered by Gaïnas and the imperial troops, and in the dreadful irony of history the moment of his ruin was the very one in which the Aquitanian adventurer seemed to have the diadem in his grasp. He was succeeded by the eunuch Eutropius, who had risen from the lowest degradation by the most menial arts of intrigue, and who has been branded for all time by the scathing satire of Claudian's tremendous invective. In 397 he stood at the summit of his influence, and had managed, by delation, murder, and banishment, to get rid of all his enemies. In this year he achieved the one good deed of his life, and the deed which nearly saved him from destruction in his hour of ruin. For in this year Nectarius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, died. Nectarius resembled one of the easy archbishops of our own Church in its days of torpor. By offending none, by taking a poor average standard of life, by speaking smooth things, and more or less answering the world according to its idols, he lived in splendour and died in the odour of sanctity. To be Patriarch of Constantinople was to be in possession of magnificent revenues, to be surrounded by flatterers and parasites, to be the dispenser of much valuable patronage, to have an acknowledged rank equal to that of the highest princes, and to wield a power far greater and more dreaded than theirs. The occupier of such a bishopric had—as most men have—two courses open to him. He might avoid all controversies by "steering through the channel of no meaning between the Scylla and Charybdis of Yes and No," and

[1] Claud. *De Bell. Gild.* 293.

he might avoid all worldly opposition by taking care that his rebukes lacked all point, and that no person and no class was offended by his denunciations. If he did this he lived a life truly delightful for men who are content with so vulgar an average. The kingdoms of the world and the glory of them were his. All lips praised him. He lived in luxury and ease; he died regretted and eulogised. All this Nectarius had enjoyed for sixteen years. It was true that he did little or no good; that men and cities and nations were none the better for his influence; that the Church lost all its meaning by thus "walking arm in arm with the world, the flesh, and the devil"; that no wrong was righted, no vice restricted, no creeping error checked, no true convert gained. But Nectarius had been during the great part of his life a civilian, and even when summoned to the patriarchate had not yet been baptized. It is probable that his conscience was one of that average stamp which is not troubled by the haunting of great ideals. He was popular in a torpid Church and a corrupt city, and amid a circle of worldly and intriguing clergy who were content with external functions and verbal profession. He probably valued himself on his easy-going prudence, and judged of his own wisdom and goodness by the estimate not of God but of the world.

On the other hand, when a bishop was a bishop indeed, he might look to the certainty of having to face ten thousand enmities. The whole world in its vice and worldliness would be in arms against him. Every selfish interest which he opposed, every fashionable sin which he denounced, every immoral custom which he resisted, would stir up against him the hornet-nest of irritated hypocrisy.[1] The opposition of the nominal Church, and of the whole faction of the clergy, whose errors and follies he confronted, would be even more bitter, more unscrupulous, and more uncompromising. In those days, and in most days, the episcopate became to slothful, vulgar, and worldly men a bed of roses, but to the best and truest men a crown of thorns. "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity," said the undaunted Hildebrand, "and therefore I die in exile."

[1] See Aug. *Ep.* xxi. *ad Valerium:* "Nihil esse in hac vita et maxime hoc tempore facilius et laetius et hominibus acceptabilius episcopi aut presbyteri aut diaconi officio, *si perfunctorie atque adulatorie res agatur;* sed nihil apud Deum miserius, et tristius, et damnabilius. Item nihil esse in hac vita, et maxime hoc tempore, difficilius, laboriosius, periculosius . . . sed apud Deum nihil beatius, si eo modo militetur, quo noster Imperator jubet."

And this was the fate which Chrysostom was now called upon to experience as Patriarch of Constantinople.[1]

When Nectarius died the flood-gates of base intrigue were opened.[2] Every hungry, greedy, worldly-hearted ecclesiastic was on the alert, until the Church became, as Chrysostom says, a Euripus of storms and varying currents. There was an endless amount of canvassing, whispering, plotting, contriving, and secret wire-pulling, into which multitudes of noble partisans, ladies, and the active coryphaei of ambitious Church-parties threw all their energy.[3] Among other bad characters, the detestable Patriarch of Alexandria—Theophilus—appeared upon the scene. He did his best to secure the election of his presbyter Isidore, who was in possession of one of his guilty secrets, since he had been his agent in an act of constructive treason.[4] But the eunuch-minister Eutropius had other views. During a visit to Antioch he had heard one of the magnificent harangues of Chrysostom, and partly out of genuine admiration, partly from the desire to secure a friend in the patriarchate, partly from the wish to do a popular act, he suggested to Arcadius the name of Chrysostom. Chrysostom was already famous, and all the better portion of the clergy and of the people desired to be under the ecclesiastical government of a true and a great man, rather than under some miserable hireling or intriguing partisan. It would indeed have been difficult to resist the unscrupulous influence of Theophilus, but Eutropius knew now to deal with him in a characteristic fashion. It was not so easy to overcome the possible reluctance of Chrysostom himself, and the certain opposition of Antioch, unwilling to lose the great orator to whom it owed so deep a debt. But these, too, were difficulties which Eutropius had skill enough to manage. He wrote to

[1] The title "Patriarch" is first used in ecclesiastical history in the Council of Constantinople at the ordination of Nectarius; Socr. v. 8. But patriarchal *authority* was older than the title itself.

[2] The only notable act of the episcopate of Nectarius was the abolition of the office of penitentiary or receiver of *public* confessions, who heard *voluntary* confessions in private, and ordered public penance. Auricular confession was not made obligatory by the Church of Rome, even once a year, till A.D. 1215. Chrysostom advises his flock "to confess their sins to God." See Bingham, Bk. xv. 8, sec. 6.

[3] Chrys. *De Sacerd.* iii. 15, 17; Pallad. *Vit. Chrys.*; Socr. vi. 7; Sozom. viii. 2.

[4] Theophilus had sent Isidore with a letter of congratulation which was to be given *either* to Theodosius *or* to Maximus, according as either won the victory in A.D. 388; Socr vi. 2.

Asterius, the Count of Antioch, bidding him to get Chrysostom secretly out of the city, and to despatch him under a strong escort to Constantinople. Accordingly Asterius invited the unsuspecting presbyter to visit with him a martyr-chapel outside the walls, and when he had arrived took possession of his person, and conducted him to Pagrae, the first stage on the road to Constantinople. There he was hurried in spite of all remonstrances into an imperial chariot, which they found ready, in charge of soldiers and palace emissaries, and was driven off at full speed from stage to stage until they arrived at the capital of the East. By this time he seems to have resigned himself to an elevation which he must have regarded as a call of God. The rank and splendour of the archbishopric had no attraction for him whatever, and he well knew his perils. His prognostications fell far short of the calamities which were in store for him. He might have said with Pope Adrian VI. that no misfortune had ever befallen him so great as his nomination to his primatial see.

XVIII

Continued

CHRYSOSTOM AS PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

(A.D. 398-404.)

"Confortare et esto vir."—3 *Reg.* ii. 2.

SECTION IV

THE arrival of Chrysostom in Constantinople was welcomed with enthusiasm by the people, and resented with dismay by the bishops and the rival candidates. Theophilus, filled with envy and chagrin, positively refused to ordain him, and complained to the Emperor that the liberty of episcopal election had been invaded. "Nevertheless," said Eutropius, "you will yourself ordain him, or——;" taking the Patriarch aside he showed him evidence against himself so damaging that Theophilus saw no choice left him between obedience and death. On Feb. 26, 398, Chrysostom was enthroned as Patriarch of Constantinople, and delivered a sermon to the assembled multitudes, which is no longer extant, but in which he promised to combat heresy with the weapons not of violence but of Scripture.[1]

From the earliest days of his episcopate he began to display that missionary ardour which is a beautiful feature in his character. From the first he was deeply interested in the Goths, and one day when he saw some of their fair-haired and blue-eyed converts kneeling in prayer in his cathedral he ventured to prophesy that to them belonged the future of the Empire. He could not address them in their own language, but he preached to them

[1] Socr. vi. 2; Sozom. viii. 7.

through an interpreter, and consecrated Unilas, one of their own nation, to be their missionary bishop. He ordained clergy to work among them, and tried to co-operate with Leontius of Ancyra in sending missionaries to the nomad Scythians on the banks of the Danube. He also strove to put down the Paganism of Phoenicia, and the heresy of the Marcionites in Cyprus. In works like these he found a happier sphere of action than among the nominal Christians of his own turbulent and erring flock.

For, indeed, Chrysostom was hardly seated on his episcopal throne before he began to experience that while it might be a luxurious position for a commonplace and *fainéant* bishop, it would be a stormy seat for one who desired with all his heart to do his duty. No bishop who was so determined as he was to carry out great and necessary reforms could have escaped bitter opposition, but the fury which he aroused against himself was partly personal. It was due to an ardent temperament, a quick irascible manner, a forcible mode of expression, and a genuine indignation against compromises and shams.[1] He was a monk, an ascetic, not unaware of the power for which he was responsible, not unconscious of the exceptional gifts with which he was endowed. He felt that as a Christian he could not tolerate the taint of neutrality in the cause of God. By training and disposition he was devoid of tact, and there was something imperious in the demeanour of a man who relied on his own perfect innocence and strong convictions. Besides all this, he had the temptations of the orator to use vehement and impulsive language which wisdom and prudence might have toned down without real injury to the cause of truth.

Like Gregory of Nazianzus, he lacked that imposing appearance which is always of advantage to a ruler. Like St. Paul and Melancthon, he was what Luther called "*ein armer durrer männlein.*" He was dwarfish of stature and emaciated (to use his own expression) as a spider (ἀραχνώδης), though his high forehead and keen eyes gave a certain dignity to his pale and worn features. He felt the self-confidence of perfect rectitude; but in worldly matters he was no match for the envious jealousy of Theophilus, the sullen dulness of Arcadius, the underhand craftiness of Severus of Gabala, and the feminine spleen of Eudoxia and her parasites.

[1] See Socrates, *H. E.* vi. 3, 21.

From the first he gave offence to all classes, but especially to the clergy. Such a man could not fail to be miserable in such surroundings. Clergy and people alike were accustomed to a lordly prelate, whose hospitality was lavish and his table magnificent. Chrysostom had a very different ideal. He revolted from luxury and despised ostentation. His playful geniality was reserved for a select and intimate circle of friends. His manner to strangers was distant and abrupt. Sharing with his age the confusion of charity with indiscriminate almsgiving, he thought it a supreme virtue to give at all times and under all circumstances to the poor, and in common with many of the best men of his age he probably increased pauperism, mendicancy, and mendacity, by lavishing money and clothing without enquiry on all who begged from him.[1] To gain means for these largesses he gave no sumptuous banquets, and dined alone on frugal fare. He was so much occupied that often—like Sir Isaac Newton—he forgot to take his scanty meal until evening. The sybarites of Constantinople could not understand this anchorite. His attire was mean, and he not only stripped his palace of its rich hangings and plate and furniture, but even sold the precious vessels and ornaments of churches if he considered them too magnificent. Nectarius had provided some splendid marbles for the Church of Anastasia, the scene of the triumphs of Gregory of Nazianzus. Chrysostom sold them, and with the proceeds founded a hospital for sick strangers. His enemies charged him with peculation and embezzlement, and declared that his pretence of lonely meals only disguised the reality of "orgies like those of a Cyclops." For all such attacks on his personal character Chrysostom, strong in the sense of innocence, cared nothing. But a man with such views and of so strong a will was not likely to rest content with setting a good example. He began to grapple with the vices of the clergy, and denounced their greed, parasitism, and self-indulgence in a way to which they had long been unaccustomed. He also increased their labours by trying to counteract the popular hymns and open-air services of the Arians with antiphonal services in the churches at night. They rebelled against these extra burdens. Many of them he suspended; to others he refused the Eucharist. In three months they were up in arms against the moral strictness which they regarded as

[1] *Ep.* iv.

tyranny.[1] They had fallen into the scandalous habit of consoling their nominal celibacy by living with widows or consecrated virgins, who were called "beloved," or "female companions." Their relations with these feminine devotees, whom they called "adopted sisters," may often have been innocent, but even when this was the case they gave room for the grossest scandal. It was disgraceful to see priests leaving the houses of their own mothers to live in these dubious intimacies, and virgins deserting the homes of unmarried brothers to live under the same roof with clerks to whom they were not related.[2] That the intimacy must have been often criminal is certain, or Chrysostom would not have ventured on branding these women as "unmarried wives," and even by darker names; nor would he have publicly declared that he regarded a bishop who sanctioned such a custom as worse than a "pander."[3] The clergy must have shrunk under the scathing sarcasm with which Chrysostom described their subservience to these "beloved"; their visits to do errands in the shops of drapers, jewellers, and perfumers; and the pompous fussiness with which they made way for their ladies in public assemblies. But it was a far more galling attack when Chrysostom said that celibacy under such conditions was a cloak for the most immoral license. The "widows," too, came in for their share of castigation. The archbishop summoned them into his presence, examined their claims, upbraided some with using the title of "widow" to secure a greater freedom in dissipation, and finally cashiered some of them with the advice that they should marry again as quickly as they could. The clergy were further galled by the advice which he gave to Olympias and other wealthy persons not to lavish their gifts too promiscuously on the clergy, but to be their own almoners;[4] nor was their rebellious indignation soothed when they heard the vehement archdeacon Serapion—who was often the evil genius of the archbishop[5]—say to him in a clerical assembly, "Bishop, you will never control these men till you have driven them all away

[1] How fully they deserved his severity is shown by the term applied to them by the witty and indignant Palladius, who classes them among the "belly-worshippers and table-giants and women-hawks" (κοιλιολάτραι καὶ τραπεζογίγαντες καὶ γυναικοϊέρακες) who were offended by the prelate's abstinence.

[2] See Jer. *Ep. ad Eustoch.*

[3] See Bingham, Bk. xvii. ch. v. sec. 20. Paul of Samosata had partly been deposed for having these *Syneisactae* in his house.

[4] Sozom. viii. 9. [5] Id.

with one rod." A roar of malediction rose against him on every side, and the clergy and bishops did their best to excite it. Chrysostom had only done what his duty required, but there have been others who achieved great reformations without perishing in the storm of opposition. He had indeed the sovereign innocence which is needful for such tasks, but he wanted the geniality, the tact, the sympathy, which are hardly less essential. If he could have blended more of the *suaviter in modo* with the *fortiter in re*—had he been more sympathetic and less autocratic, calmer and less passionate, in his severity and invective—he would have accomplished greater ends at a less painful cost. It was too much to expect that the masses of shepherds who fed themselves could be ever as he was—frugal and content.

Nor did the archbishop stand on much better terms with the world in general. When in 398 the city was shaken with earthquake he attributed this to the wrath of God against the crimes and prodigality of the upper classes. He attacked avarice and luxury until a cry arose that he was trying to set the poor against the rich. He fulminated against immorality in terms which seemed intolerable. He spoke of the popular shows of the theatre and the circus with energetic execration. Nothing was too small for his indignant satire. He denounced the use of earrings, which would have maintained a thousand of the poor. He ridiculed the gold bits used for horses, the gold bracelets on the arms of menials, the rich carpets on the floors of the palaces, the walls incrusted with marble and ivory, the silver couches, the gold utensils. He advised the dandies of Constantinople to wear their magnificent boots on their heads instead of on their feet. He rebuked the ladies for their silk robes and gold embroideries. He drew vivid pictures of the prevalent gluttony and frivolity. He did not hesitate to make his hearers laugh at their own follies, while at the same time he gave vent to unsparing invective on the idle church attendance which led to no moral amelioration, and evaporated in excited applause or "crocodilian tears." If Eutropius had vainly fancied that all men have their price, and that his share in the promotion of Chrysostom had secured him a friend in the Patriarch, he soon found himself grievously mistaken. The all-powerful eunuch could hardly doubt that some of Chrysostom's terrible invectives touched him very closely; and when he endeavoured

in 398 to abrogate the rights of churches to afford an asylum to political criminals, Chrysostom became his open and strenuous opponent, though he could not succeed in extorting from the Emperor the entire rescindment of the obnoxious decrees.

As yet, however, the archbishop had not openly broken with the imperial family. It is true that he paid them no adulation, and never went near the court except when he had some demand to make or some disapproval to express. But the Empress Eudoxia—young, beautiful, ambitious, anxious above all things to overthrow the galling dominance of Eutropius—was eager to gain so powerful an ally, and endeavoured in all ways to win his approbation. Her chamberlain, Amantius, was a pious and honourable man, and by his hand Eudoxia sent magnificent gifts to the churches and to the poor. She even took up the habits of a devotee, and in Sept. 398, when some relics were being translated to a martyry outside the walls, she followed the procession unveiled and with bare feet, and so delighted Chrysostom that his sermon contained a burst of eulogy upon her glorious piety.[1]

He spoke in the most glowing terms of the torchlight procession, which resembled a river of fire, of the multitudes pressing on each other's footsteps like the waves of the sea, of the Empress walking humbly like a handmaid of the Lord, touching the urn which held the relics or the veil by which they were covered. The passionate words with which he began his harangue after the deposition of the relics were afterwards made one of the charges against him. "What shall I say," he exclaimed; "what shall I speak! I exult and am mad, but with a madness better than wisdom. Flying and dancing I am borne on high; in a word, I am drunken with this spiritual delight." No doubt such expressions sounded as reprehensible as the metaphors quoted against Demosthenes by Æschines when they were retailed to those who were not under the spell of the orator's enthusiasm.

The delusion did not last long, for the fall of Eutropius was at hand, and it came like that of Rufinus, when he seemed to have attained the very zenith of his success. To the unspeak-

[1] In this oration (*Opp.* xii. 468-473) he speaks of miracles at the tombs of the martyrs. Elsewhere he speaks of miracles as having practically ceased. (See the passages quoted in Lardner's *Credibility*, ii. 616, 617.)

able disgust of the Western world, Arcadius yielded to his chamberlain's ambitious wishes by nominating him to the consulship. That an eunuch should be consul, that the annals of the year should run in the name of one who had been a degraded slave, seemed to Stilicho and Claudian and even to Honorius a horrible degradation, sufficient to make the Cassii and Fabii uneasy in their graves.[1] Rome refused to recognise more than one consul that year—the Roman noble Mallius Theodorus. Eutropius, on the other hand, was intoxicated with this immense honour, and hastened his own downfall. When Tribigild, chief of the Ostrogothic Gruthonges, came to court to ask for promotion, Eutropius treated him with indifference and sent him away empty-handed. Stung by the taunts of his wife, Tribigild revolted, and Gaïnas the Goth—now as savagely exasperated against Eutropius as he had been against Rufinus, whose murder he had caused, embraced the quarrel of his kinsman. The eunuch, affecting to make light of the peril, and saying that it required the intervention of a judge rather than of a general, sent a fat and incompetent plebeian named Leo to suppress the Gruthonges.[2] Tribigild surprised his camp and inflicted on him a total defeat, in flying from which Leo was drowned in a swamp. Gaïnas refused to resist the advancing enemy unless Eutropius was put to death. Arcadius was reduced to despair by these calamities, complicated as they were by the accession of a hostile king to the throne of Persia, and the rumours that Stilicho was about to march upon Constantinople to avenge the wrongs of the insulted West. Eutropius, with the infatuation which so often precedes doom, chose this moment to break finally with the Empress, and to make to her the insolent remark that the hand which had raised her to the throne could hurl her from it. Eudoxia was well aware that she owed her elevation to the deep intrigues and skilful manœuvres of the eunuch, but for whom Arcadius would certainly have married the daughter of Rufinus. But she, the orphan daughter of the Frank general Bauto, had all the pride and passion of her race. She had not ascended the throne to be the slave of a slave. Haughtily waving him aside, she rushed to the chamber where lay her two children—Flaccilla

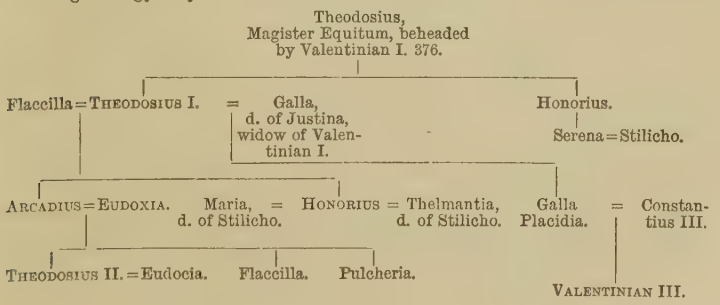
[1] Claud. *in Eutrop.* i. 459 *sqq.* "Eunuchi vestros habitus, insignia sumunt
Ambigui Romana mares."

[2] Id. ii. 377: "Crassa mole Leo , , , doctissimus artis quondam lanificae."

aged three, and the infant Pulcheria.[1] Snatching the children in her arms, she hurried with them into the Emperor's cabinet, and there amid sobs and cries and floods of tears scarcely found voice to tell Arcadius the insult she had received. Roused for once into passion by the painful scene, the Emperor instantly sent for Eutropius, cashiered him on the spot from all his offices, and bade him leave the palace instantly on pain of death.

The news of his fall spread like fire amid the throngs of courtiers and menials, and the miserable man, who had so long wielded the whole force of the Empire, knew that, amid the hatred of the thousands whom he had wronged, his life was not worth a moment's purchase. Though he had himself abolished the right of asylum for criminals charged with treason, he fled headlong to the Church, and there defiling his gray hairs with dust, took refuge in the inmost sanctuary and grasped one of the marble columns which supported the altar (Jan. 399). Chrysostom was immediately summoned, and arrived just in time to save the wretched suppliant. Already the church began to ring with menacing voices, and some even of the clergy murmured that such a man deserved no shelter from condign retribution. But the archbishop at once flung over him the robe of his protection, and reminded the clerics that the whole situation illustrated alike the power and the mercy of the Church. The crowds momently increased, for the throng in the great amphitheatre had heard the news, and all joined with the soldiers in frantic demands for the head of the minister. But the undaunted demeanour of the archbishop overawed even the insolence of the soldiery. "You shall not slay Eutropius," he exclaimed, "unless you first slay me. Take me to the Emperor." Weary of the struggle, they at

[1] A genealogy may here be useful—



last consented to reserve the decision to the Emperor, and Chrysostom was conducted to the palace between a double hedge of swords and spears. The Emperor dwelt on the enormity of the offences committed by Eutropius, but Chrysostom replied that human laws could not supersede the Divine, and that the downfall of Eutropius furnished a striking proof of these truths. Arcadius could not resist the ascendency of the prelate, and he commanded that the asylum should not be violated. The soldiers almost broke out into revolt on hearing his decision, but the Emperor preferred to face them rather than refuse the demand of Chrysostom, and when his arguments had failed he implored that the life of Eutropius should be at least granted as a favour to himself. Only when the soldiers saw the Emperor weeping did they consent to relinquish their fierce design.

Next morning the cathedral was filled with an enormous and agitated crowd. Seating himself in the ambo, Chrysostom ordered the curtains of the sanctuary to be drawn, and pointing to the poor fallen eunuch as he grovelled at the foot of the altar in abject terror, he poured forth an impassioned stream of eloquence on the vanity of human wishes, in which he addressed sometimes the unhappy supplicant, sometimes the surging multitude, and tried to enforce by that striking scene the transitoriness of earthly glory and the duty of compassion. "The altar," he said, "is more awful than ever, now that it holds the lion chained." Never was there a more powerful sermon or a more impressive scene. The pathos of the occasion was far deeper than that when Massillon moved his vast audience to tears by the first words he spoke as he leant from his pulpit over the narrow coffin of Le Grand Monarque. Chrysostom was saving the life of his enemy, not without peril to his own. His persecutors afterwards accused him of having insulted the unfortunate; the charge was not true, but possibly a man of less stern and inflexible temperament might have used more sparingly the language of reproach to one fallen from such a height.[1]

But Eutropius had sinned too deeply to hope for safety. Either because he was tempted by vain promises, or because he distrusted the security of his asylum, he left the sanctuary, was seized, and banished to Cyprus. There he was tried on the fresh charge of treason involved in his having mingled imperial insignia with those of his consulate. He was sent back to Chalcedon and

[1] Two Homilies on Eutropius are extant (*Opp.* iii. 454, 482.)

beheaded. His enormous wealth was confiscated to the imperial treasury, the acts of his consulship were cancelled, his name erased from the lists, and his statues thrown down and broken to pieces. His offices, at the suggestion of Eudoxia, were shared between Aurelian and Count John, of whom the latter was popularly believed to be the father of her children. She herself became the dominant person in the Empire, and was guided by a coterie of three wealthy, evil-minded, and intriguing women named Castricia, Eugraphia, and Marsa. These middle-aged coquettes had been driven to fury by the pulpit denunciations of vanity, vice, and luxury, which they well knew that the people applied to them. They had trembled when they heard the archbishop declare that he would repel from the Eucharist mere painted and bedizened Jezebels who came to the Lord's table with rouged cheeks and eyes blackened with antimony like Egyptian idols. They raged against Chrysostom with all the fury of drunken maenads.[1]

This new tyranny of Eudoxia did not at all suit the views of Gaïnas, who now joined Tribigild in menacing Constantinople, and demanded the surrender of Aurelian, Count John, and Saturninus, the husband of Castricia (A.D. 400). To prevent worse perils, the three nobles surrendered themselves. The barbarians were induced to be content with the banishment of Saturninus, but Count John was forced to taste all the bitterness of death. Gaïnas, in ferocious jest, forced him to lay his head on the block before his executioner, who, while he awaited the deadly stroke, merely scratched his neck with the sword. The preservation of their lives was possibly due to the efforts of Chrysostom,[2] who also exerted himself to defeat the demand of Gaïnas—that a Church should be assigned to the Arians within the city walls. Gaïnas strangely prided himself on his skill in theological argument, but he was completely silenced by the dauntless superiority of the archbishop. From this moment the courage of Gaïnas seemed to be broken, and he too went down the path of ruin. He had met for the first time one who was not in the least afraid of him. Chrysostom, with almost brutal

[1] χῆραι μὲν ἀνδρόπλουτοι δὲ . . . ταραξάνδριαι καὶ ἀνασείστριαι . . . κάθαπερ φάλαγξ οἰνομαινής.

[2] Zosimus, v. 18. John was banished into Thrace, but returned after the death of Gaïnas, and saved his life by flight from a popular *émeute*. Chrysostom was falsely charged with having betrayed his hiding-place to the soldiers. Phot. *Bibl.* 59. See the Homily on these events (*Opp.* iii. 482-487).

frankness, reminded him of "the rags in which he had crossed the Danube," reproached him with his faithlessness, perjury, and ingratitude, and plainly told him that his rewards far exceeded his deserts. The spell of the Goth's arrogance was thus effectually broken. He never again showed himself the same man, but quailed before the unwonted discouragement of having found an opponent who was more than his match.[1]

The inhabitants of Constantinople, stung beyond endurance by his insolent exactions, attacked his Goths and gained several advantages. The Emperor was so fortunate as to secure the aid of another Gothic chieftain named Fravitta, who had married a Roman lady. Fravitta harassed and defeated Gaïnas, and finally drove him to take shelter on the icy banks of the Borysthenes. There he was hunted down by Uldin, King of the Huns, and finally killed. His head was sent on a lance-point to the city in which he had similarly displayed the head of Rufinus. Fravitta was made consul, and Eudoxia at last reached the summit of her ambition by being proclaimed with the title Augusta.

Meanwhile Chrysostom had not been wholly absorbed by the claims of moral reformation among his own clergy and his own flock. He had found time to enlist Theophilus of Alexandria, Acacius of Beroea, and the Western bishops, in a successful endeavour to procure the recognition of Flavian, and so to end the deplorable schism of Antioch. He had obtained from the Emperor fresh decrees for the suppression of Paganism, and he had sent forth missionaries to various lands, and, above all, to labour among the Goths, in whom his prophetic insight saw the future heirs of the Roman civilisation. These works gave the highest scope for his efforts. His supreme desire was the spiritual good of his people. "You," he said to them in the homily delivered before his exile, "are my fathers, my brothers, my sons, my limbs, my body, my life, my crown, my consolation, my anointing, my light." The charge that he was trying to play the part of a demagogue was flagrantly untrue. From the vulgar ambition of worldly dominance he was entirely free. Had it been otherwise—had he deigned to combat men like Theophilus and women like Eudoxia with their own weapons—he might have been the most powerful person in Constantinople, and have controlled the destinies of the Eastern Empire as decisively and as beneficently as Ambrose had done in the West. But Ambrose was a born ruler, who had en-

[1] Theodoret, v. 32; Sozomen, viii. 4.

joyed the training of a statesman, and Chrysostom had come into corrupt cities from a mountain cave.

The story of the iniquities with which Chrysostom had to grapple, as told by his friend Palladius of Helenopolis, in the dialogue in which he gives an account of the Patriarch's life, is one of the saddest and most deplorable among the many sad and deplorable narratives which deface the ecclesiastical history of the fourth century. It exhibits the prevalence among bishops and clergy of an almost inconceivable amount of greed, worldliness, and disorder. I shall hurry as rapidly as possible over these records of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, which are never more odious than when they flourish in religious circles and among religious partisans.

Before the death of Gaïnas, in May A.D. 400,[1] there had been a synod of twenty-two bishops in Constantinople, and at this synod a paper of seven accusations had been presented by Eusebius, Bishop of Valentinopolis, against one of their number, Antoninus, Bishop of Ephesus. Eusebius charged him with having melted sacred vessels to provide his son with plate, with using marble and columns which belonged to churches for his own bath and dining-room, seizing Church property, selling bishoprics, and not living a celibate life. Not content with pressing his accusation with unseemly vehemence, Eusebius even thrust the paper upon Chrysostom in the cathedral, adjuring him with oaths to investigate these charges, which Antoninus and other inculpated bishops absolutely denied. Prevented by an order from the court from proceeding in person to Asia Minor to enquire into the matter, Chrysostom appointed a commission of three bishops to act as judges. Meanwhile Eusebius accepted a bribe from Antoninus, and joined him in the endeavour to defeat the action of the commission by every form of vexatious hindrance and delay. Antoninus and the clergy of Ephesus entreated Chrysostom to come in person. This he was allowed to do in 401. He appointed one of his deacons, Heracleides, to the vacant bishopric, and proceeded to set in order the gross irregularities which he found existing on every side. He deposed at least six bishops who had simoniacally bought their sees, and a medical adventurer named Gerontius, who had intrigued himself into the bishopric of Nicomedia, and had induced Helladius of Heraclea to consecrate

[1] To this period belong Chrysostom's somewhat hasty Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles.

him by getting an army appointment for his son. By these stern but necessary acts he had deepened the hatred with which he was regarded, and he seems to have assumed a responsibility which, though sanctioned by long custom, was of doubtful legality. His precedence had been fixed by the Council of Constantinople as next to that of the Bishop of Rome; but the *jurisdiction* of the see was left undefined. No doubt by this visitation he raised up against himself a host of implacable enemies, and contributed to his own ultimate fall. His predecessor had indeed exercised a sort of primacy over the dioceses of Thrace and Asia, but what might be done without offence by the mild, courtly, and indolent Nectarius, assumed a very different aspect in the hands of the stern and fervid Chrysostom. When he came back, after three months' absence, he found Constantinople full of hostile cabals. A certain Severian, Bishop of Gabala, envious of the reputation for eloquence gained at Constantinople by Antiochus, Bishop of Ptolemais, wished to display his own capacities before a metropolitan audience. Having prepared a number of striking discourses, he went to the capital, and by universal flattery intrigued himself into such popularity that he was appointed to act as deputy during the absence of Chrysostom. He used his delegated authority to undermine the archbishop's position. One person—the faithful Serapion—saw through the man and all his base designs. On one occasion, when Serapion did not rise as the Bishop of Gabala passed through the room, Severian in a burst of anger exclaimed, "If Serapion dies a Christian, Jesus Christ was not incarnate." The last clause only of this grossly improper remark was overheard, and Chrysostom ordered Severian to leave the city. Had he not done so, the Bishop of Gabala would probably have fallen a victim to the fury of the indignant populace. Eudoxia, however, determined to support a sycophant who had flattered her, and placing her son Theodosius on the knees of Chrysostom, adjured him to rescind his order and to re-admit Severian to communion. Out of respect for imperial authority Chrysostom did so; but Severian remained one of his deadliest enemies.[1]

Another episcopal foe was the aged Acacius of Beroea, who had once been his warm admirer, and who had been sent to Pope Siricius to announce his elevation. About this time he had paid a visit to the archbishop, and found his frugal fare and homely

[1] *Homil. de recipiendo Severiano* (*Opp.* iii. 492-494).

surroundings so distasteful that he chose to regard them as a personal insult to himself. He even forgot himself so far as to exclaim, in the hearing of the clergy, ἐγὼ αὐτῳ ἀρτύω χύτραν, "I'll cook a dish for him!"[1] These and other spirits, if possible more wicked than themselves, found a fitting leader in Theophilus of Alexandria.

Every engine of slander was put into play. The faults of Chrysostom were magnified, his virtues misrepresented, his words distorted into dangerous meanings. He was charged with avarice, parsimony, irascibility, and haughtiness. His enemies said that he had behaved rudely to Gaïnas, and mercilessly to Eutropius. Most dangerously of all, they asserted that he had been guilty of treasonable language against the sacred majesty of the Augusta, and had insulted her under the thin disguise of an invective upon Jezebel.[2] The archbishop had to experience "furens quid foemina possit." It must be admitted that there was sometimes a want of perspective in his pulpit denunciations, and that while he had to combat the flagrant immoralities of the circus and the theatre, as well as the sins of an immoral clergy, it was hardly worth while to lash himself into fury against the rouge and false hair of the ladies, and the gold-embroidered boots of the youthful fops. His standard was far higher than any to which Constantinople had been accustomed, and it was enforced in a manner too haughtily uncompromising. He became as intolerable to worldly Christians as a lamp to sore eyes.[3] It is also probable that the vividly graphic style of Chrysostom's rhetoric lent itself readily to personal applications. When he was painting in language of humorous scorn the picture of some faded and bedizened dowager, or of some "lisping hawthorn-bud" of the court, there were ladies and courtiers who would grow uneasy, and would understand the smiles and meaning glances of their particular friends. Eudoxia, and the three ladies who formed her council—Marsa, Castricia, and Eugraphia—vowed revenge, and joined themselves heart and soul with the enemies of Chrysostom. They even sent a spy—a monk named Isaac—

[1] Like the French, *Je lui prépare un plat de ma façon.* Pallad. *Dial.* 6.

[2] In denouncing Severian and Antiochus in his usual unmeasured way he had compared them to "the priests who ate of Jezebel's table"; and his remarks on Naboth's vineyard seem also to have had their application to some rapacious act of the Empress. Leont. *Orat. de Vit. Chrys.*

[3] Pallad. *Vit.* xviii. (p. 62): βαρὺς γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἦν καὶ φαινόμενος, κάθαπερ λύχνος λημῶσιν ὄμμασιν.

to Antioch to see if they could rake up any old scandals in his youthful life. But this part of their plot was a signal failure.

On the other hand, the circle of the friends of Chrysostom was not large, and nearly all of them — Heracleides, now of Ephesus, Cassian, Serapion, and others—with whom he lived on terms of delightful intimacy, were involved in his subsequent ruin. Among the ladies at Constantinople he found true supporters in Pentadia, wife of the Consul Timasius, Salvina, daughter of Count Gildo, and the famous deaconess Olympias. This noble and beautiful woman was the granddaughter of the Praefect Ablavius. She had lost her husband Count Nebridius about 386, and thenceforward devoted her life to works of charity. She had enjoyed the friendship of Gregory of Nazianzus,[1] and now became the attached follower of Chrysostom, paying special attention to the bodily wants which, in spite of his many infirmities, he was constantly tempted to neglect. Her immense wealth attracted the attention of many designing persons, of whom the Patriarch Theophilus was one, and Chrysostom deepened his unpopularity by warning her against an indiscriminate attention to the applications made to her by bishops and clergy.

But the bursting of the storm was due to the deeply-seated spite and hatred of the Patriarch of Alexandria.[2] The narrative of the rest of Chrysostom's life forms one of the most painful chapters in the history of the Church. Intrigue, violence, and baseness triumphed, and saintly virtue was humiliated to the dust.

Theophilus had once been an ardent Origenist, and had even directed a pastoral letter against the ignorant Anthropomorphites, who could only conceive of a corporeal God. But when first Aterbius and then Epiphanius came heresy-hunting into Palestine, and flung the apple of discord into a peaceful and flourishing Church; when Jerome in his terror of the charge of heresy had begun in his turn to denounce Origen; and when Theophilus had been himself terrified by the savage violence of the Anthropomorphite monks, he suddenly (in 398) turned round and be-

[1] Greg. Naz. *Epp.* lvii. lviii.

[2] Dr. Neale (*Hist. of the Holy Eastern Church*, i. sec. xxvi.) tries to say all that can be said in mitigation of the judgment of posterity upon Theophilus, but even his admissions are terribly condemnatory.

came one of the fiercest opponents of the followers of Origen.[1] He had thereby earned his popular nickname of *Amphallax*, or "The Trimmer." Private reasons of a darker character probably influenced this bad man's mind. The aged and saintly Isidore—a man universally respected and beloved—had received from an Alexandrian widow a large sum of money to be spent on clothing the poor, upon the one condition, confirmed by an oath, that the rapacious Patriarch should not be told of it. Theophilus, however, heard the fact from his spies, and demanded the money.[2] Isidore, bound by oath, refused to give it up, and Theophilus determined to ruin him on a charge of infamy, which he pretended had been brought against him eighteen years before, and of which he now attempted to suborn a witness by a bribe of gold. The conscience of the young witness and of his mother revolted against the wickedness of accepting money in order to blight the character of an innocent man, and the charge broke hopelessly down. In spite of this, Theophilus procured the degradation of Isidore, and he was forced to fly from Alexandria. The next victims of the Patriarch were the four "Tall Brothers"—Ammonius, Dioscorus, Eusebius, and Euthymius—who were known throughout the whole Church for their exemplary virtues and self-denials, and whom Theophilus himself had loaded with eulogies and honours.[3] He had compelled the two last to be presbyters in Alexandria, and hearing that they were prepared to request leave to retire into the desert out of sheer disgust at his crimes, he burst into a torrent of invectives, and charged them with Origenism.[4] Failing in his attempt to force them to bear false witness against Isidore, he turned pale and livid, fell with fury upon the aged Ammonius, and smote him in the face with blows so violent as to draw blood, yelling at him, "Heretic,

[1] The story of this shameful tergiversation is told by Socrates (*H. E.* vi. 7).

[2] He was an insatiable builder. λιθομανής. Isid. *Ep.* i. 152.

[3] Ammonius was no less a person than the monk who had accompanied Athanasius in his exile, and whose austerities had struck the Romans with astonishment (Socr. iv. 23). He was called παρώτης because he had cut off an ear to escape being made a bishop (Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* 12). He had been a confessor in the days of Valens.

[4] The reader must not fall into the vulgar mistake of confounding Origenism with Universalism. Origen's Universalism was never condemned in any creed, or at any council, or by any great teacher. The two views which were accounted heretical were his belief in (1) the prae-existence of souls, and (2) the salvability of the devil—both of them purely scholastic and speculative questions. See *supra*, ii. 249.

anathematise Origen!" He then summoned a synod of his creatures, who excommunicated them as magicians and heretics, and finally he raised a brutal band of rogues and drink-maddened fanatics, and attacked their refuges in the deserts of Nitria, burnt and pillaged their cells, wrecked their chapels, and destroyed their libraries. The brothers and some of their monks, after narrowly escaping with their lives, fled first to Jerusalem, then to Scythopolis, and being hunted from place to place by the relentless rage of their persecutor, took refuge at last in Constantinople, and implored the protection of Chrysostom. The archbishop behaved with kindness and compassion, but with the utmost caution, and wrote to Theophilus begging him to make peace with the monks. Theophilus made no reply, but used every exertion to blacken and defame the character of Chrysostom, and to bring about *his* destruction also on the charge of Origenism. He enlisted not only Jerome but also the arrogant and narrow-minded Epiphanius in the same unholy cause.

The monks, finding Chrysostom unable or unwilling to create a schism in the Church by the adoption of their cause, appealed to the Emperor, and brought many terrible charges against Theophilus. He was summoned to come and answer for himself at Constantinople, but Chrysostom declined to sit in judgment upon him. Indeed the conduct of Chrysostom towards Theophilus is marked by a moderation and almost a timidity which is in strange contrast with his usual vehement fearlessness, so often displayed to the Emperor and the court. There is little doubt that he might at any time have swept Theophilus and his followers out of the city by appealing to the people. He suffered things to go against him almost by default. Theophilus took advantage of this. By the unctuous intimation that Epiphanius had rescued him from his Origenism,[1] the Egyptian prelate induced the feeble old man to go and accuse Chrysostom of heresy in his own capital. Theophilus determined to come not as the accused, but as the accuser. On the arrival of Epiphanius at Constantinople (April 403) Eudoxia showed him flattering attentions, and his conduct was so disorderly that we can only suppose that his reason was enfeebled by age, and his head turned by adulation and spiritual pride. By ordaining a deacon in Constantinople he flagrantly violated the 16th canon of the Council of Nice.[2] But the expostulation of the Goth Theotimus, Metropolitan of

[1] Sozom. viii. 13.

[2] See, too, *Can. Apost.* xxxv.

Scythia, the bold appeal of the monks to his better reason, the calm but manly remonstances of Chrysostom, and the obvious risk that his intrusive conduct would arouse a tumult, at length opened the old man's eyes to the unwarrantable folly and irregularity of his intrusion into the diocese of a bishop in every way his superior.[1] To Ammonius, the eldest survivor of the Tall Brothers, he was obliged to make the pitiful confession—a confession not unknown to us even in our own days—that he had never read the writings or taken the trouble to ascertain the real views of the men whom he had left his diocese to denounce! He had fancied himself a champion of orthodoxy, and, after having been guilty of more than one petulant and illegal act, he found himself the dupe and tool of an unscrupulous intrigue. He left Constantinople, but he left it in anger. As he stepped on board the vessel which was to bear him back to Cyprus, he exclaimed to the bishops who accompanied him, "I leave to you the city, and the palace, and hypocrisy; but I go, for I must make haste."[2] We can hardly believe the story of Sozomen and Socrates that, on parting, Chrysostom said to Epiphanius, "I hope that you will not return to your diocese," and that the old man replied, "I hope that you will not die a bishop." But if such stormy words did pass between them they were sadly fulfilled. Epiphanius died on his voyage home, and Chrysostom in exile.

Chrysostom saw the gathering of the storm by which he was to be overwhelmed. He knew, and he afterwards told his people, that the real reason for the hatred against him was because he had lived in humble simplicity; that he had not strewn his palace with rich carpets, or clothed his apparitors in silk and gold, or flattered the effeminacy and sensuality of the rich. He had been as an Elijah in the court of Jezebel. "And what had he to fear?" he asked, much in the same tone as Ambrose and Basil. Was he to fear death? Christ was his life. Or the loss of his goods? He had brought nothing into

[1] Socr. vi. 14; Sozom. viii. 14. The charge made by Theophilus and his clique that Chrysostom called Epiphanius "a fool and a demon" is incredible, though it is likely enough that the irritating obstinacy and intrusiveness of the Bishop of Salamis may have provoked him into irascible expressions. Theophilus himself had once expressed open contempt for Epiphanius, and had denounced him to Pope Siricius for his narrow bigotry.

[2] Sozom. viii. 15: *ἀφίημι ὑμῖν τὴν πόλιν καὶ τὰ βασίλεια καὶ τὴν ὑπόκρισιν· σπεύδω γὰρ πάνυ σπεύδω.*

the world, and could carry nothing out. He had no desire but to live for the good of their souls. If, however, his homily on the vices of women in general was delivered immediately after the departure of Epiphanius, it was, to say the least, ill-timed. It has not come down to us; perhaps it was regarded as too dangerous to preserve. The most ordinary prudence might have warned Chrysostom that every word of it would be applied directly to the Empress, and that it could not but precipitate his fall.

Theophilus was kept aware by his spies, and by criminous priests whom Chrysostom had deposed, that the archbishop's enemies were daily increasing in number and influence. He therefore collected twenty-eight of his dependent bishops and sailed to Constantinople, where he was welcomed in Aug. 403 by the rabble of Alexandrian sailors and by all the bad and disaffected clergy. Haughtily rejecting the courteous invitation of Chrysostom, he took up his abode in the palace of Placidia at Pera.[1] He had come, says Palladius, laden, like a beetle with dung, with all the best things of Egypt, and even of India,[2] and threw himself heart and soul into his disgraceful task of cajoling and bribing all the worst of the clergy to conspire against their bishop. Chrysostom declined to examine the crimes laid to the charge of Theophilus, thinking that he should be judged in his own province, but also partly, no doubt, to avert a schism in the Church.[3] Theophilus therefore gave the name of a council to his packed and pitiful following of twenty-three subservient Egyptians and seven others from Armenia, Persia, and Mesopotamia. The place chosen for the so-called council was Chalcedon, chiefly because the Bishop of Chalcedon was an Egyptian and a relative of Theophilus, a man of fickle and violent character named Cyrinus, who had accompanied Chrysostom in 401 into Asia, but had for some reason become one of his most deadly foes. The opening deliberations were marked by a grim and ominous incident. While Cyrinus was in the midst of an acrimonious harangue, Maruthas, Bishop of Mesopotamia, passing

[1] Pallad. *Dialog.* 2: *οὐχ ἡμῖν συνεγένετο, οὐ λόγων μετέδωκεν, οὐκ εὐχῆς οὐ κοινωνίας.* Conf. Chrys. *Ep. ad Innocent.* (*Opp.* iii. 530).

[2] *κάθαπερ κάνθαρος πεφορτωμένος τῆς κόπρου.*

[3] Theophilus himself insisted that if he were to be judged it could only be by Egyptian bishops—a safe stipulation, since they were all absolutely under his authority. Yet he had no hesitation to come "seventy-five days' journey" to sit in judgment on Chrysostom.—Pallad. *Dial.* 7.

by him, trod on his foot. Maruthas was a heavy man, and very probably his sandals were studded with nails. The wound gangrened, and the foot had to be amputated. Cyrinus was thus prevented from taking part in the opening proceedings. He never recovered from this injury, and died three years later after great agony and a renewal of the amputation. To the last he continued to pursue Chrysostom with his hatred, and was one of the four who goaded Arcadius into his second decree of banishment. Theophilus assembled his creatures in the palace of Rufinus, known as "the Oak," and proceeded to arraign and condemn the archbishop in defiance of the protest sent to Chalcedon by forty bishops who were assembled at Constantinople. Chrysostom behaved with the utmost calmness and forbearance, and meekly bore the outrageous insolence to which he was subjected by the so-called "Synod of the Oak." He refused, however, to acknowledge or submit to the pretensions of Theophilus and his creatures, or to pay any attention to their citation, unless they excluded from their number his open and notorious enemies.[1] They proceed in his absence to try him on twenty-nine charges, for the most part preposterous as well as false, the most perilous charge being that he had called the Empress Jezebel, and that he had treasonously played upon her name by talking of *adoxia*.[2] The charges were brought by a dubious monk named Isaac, and an archdeacon named John whom Chrysostom had once deposed for cruelty to a slave.[3]

[1] Especially Theophilus, Severian, Acacius, and Antiochus.

[2] On one occasion, just before his first banishment, he used the phrase *εἰς ἀδοξίαν ἐντρέχει*. It would have been but common prudence to avoid a word which might at once have reminded his hearers of the Empress. The jester of King Charles got into very serious trouble for saying, "Much glory to God and little *laud* to the devil."

[3] Curiously enough the one charge which Chrysostom repudiates with the most feverish energy is the purely ecclesiastical and artificial offence of having administered the Sacrament after having eaten (*Ep.* cxxv.); and yet he shows quite clearly in the same epistle that, even if he had done so, he would have done nothing blamable, since our Lord was not fasting when He instituted the Lord's Supper. To the accusation of immorality he replied that his emaciated frame had long been dead to all carnal desires, and yet he was charged with privately indulging in "Cyclopean orgies" of gluttony, intemperance, and lust! Another charge, brought by Isaac, was that he promised forgiveness to repentance, however often the offender sinned. This was simply based on those descriptions of "the abyss of God's mercy" to penitent sinners which had earned him the title of "John of repentance." The acts of this deplorable assembly of ecclesiastics are preserved in Photius (*Bibl. Cod.* 59, see Baronius on A.D. 403). Some of the charges are as grotesquely frivolous as those brought against Bishop Farrar, the

That he should be condemned by such a body of persons was a foregone conclusion; and when the wicked farce was ended, Theophilus, having no more need to persecute the Tall Brothers, pretended to be reconciled to the two of them who survived, and shed hypocritical tears over the two who had succumbed to his relentless persecution—admitting that Ammonius was the holiest monk he had ever known! Now that the charge of Origenism, the orthodox fury of Epiphanius, and the sensitive timidity of Jerome had served his turn, he returned to his own study and admiration of Origen without any disguise.

The Emperor ratified the decree of the Synod of the Oak, and after preaching farewell sermons in which he strove to calm the excited feelings of his people, Chrysostom quietly slipped out of the church at noon, yielded himself to the Emperor's officers, and was conveyed after dark first to Hieron in Bithynia, then to Praenetus, opposite Nicomedia. He only yielded to the Emperor because he wished to prevent tumult and bloodshed. Not all the vile arts of Theophilus or Severian could repress the burst of indignation caused by the success of their nefarious proceedings, and it proved that had Chrysostom been such a man as Theophilus he might have caused a revolt in Constantinople before which his enemies and the Empress herself would have been swept away like chaff. He yielded only in order to prevent rebellion and bloodshed; but when once he had been conveyed out of the city, his friends might have been unable to help him had it not been for an earthquake which shook especially the palace and the bedchamber of the Empress.[1] The superstitious feelings of Eudoxia were alarmed, and she wrote in eager haste to assure Chrysostom, truly or falsely, that she was guiltless of his expulsion, and had fallen at the feet of the Emperor to secure his restoration. He returned, but was at first unwilling to enter the city until his deposition should have been cancelled by a general council. Such, however, was the menacing attitude of the populace that the Emperor and Empress entreated him to abandon this scruple. He was conducted back in magnificent triumph, and preached once more to his people in the Church

Marian martyr. Chrysostom is accused of dressing and undressing himself and eating a lozenge on his episcopal throne; of having charged three deacons with stealing his pallium, etc.

[1] See Socr. vi. 16; Sozom. viii. 18; Pallad. p. 75; and see Chrysostom's *Sermo post reditum.*

of the Apostles. Eudoxia and Chrysostom for the last time exchanged words of glowing eulogy. Sixty bishops declared the illegality of the Synod of the Oak, and meanwhile Theophilus, whose life was no longer safe even amid his rabble of Egyptians, slunk away by night to incur the fresh guilt of other and more successful intrigues, which filled to the full the cup of his iniquity.[1]

But the little gleam of prosperity which had shone on the life of Chrysostom was swallowed up almost immediately in the blackest clouds. Two months had barely elapsed before Eudoxia, who had by that time recovered from the superstitious terror caused by the earthquake, was raging with even more than her former virulence. Intoxicated by the dizzy heights of power to which she had now scaled her way, she procured the erection of a porphyry column surmounted by a silver statue of herself. It was placed opposite the Church of St. Sophia, and uncovered in Sept. 403 amid the tumult of Pagan ceremonies which marked the cult of imperial personages. Chrysostom was disgusted alike by the heathenish character of the rejoicings and by the disturbance thus caused to the church services, and he complained to the city praefect. So far from assisting him, the praefect only reported his complaints to the Empress in the most invidious and exaggerated form. Whether Chrysostom had or had not ever used the celebrated words (now found in two homilies of dubious authenticity), "Again Herodias dances, again she rages, again she demands the head of John,"[2] it is clear that in his denunciations of vice and luxury, and especially in his orations against the sins of women, he had used many phrases which malice might distort into insults against Eudoxia. Here, however, was a more tangible offence, and in concert with her evil female friends, and yet more evil ecclesiastical abettors, Eudoxia determined to play the farce of procuring the condemnation of the archbishop by the semblance of a general council packed with enemies of Chrysostom and ambitious creatures of the court.

Finding that any renewal of the attempt to blacken his

[1] Pallad. *Dial.* 2: λάθρα μέσον νυκτῶν εἰς ἀκάτιον ἑαυτὸν ἐμβαλὼν οὕτως ἀπέδρα. He says that the Constantinopolitans were ready to throw him into the sea.

[2] Socr. *H. E.* vi. 15. Montfaucon and Tillemont reject the sermon which begins with these words. Chrysostom would surely have known that it was not Herodias who danced, but Salome.

character could only lead to dangerous failure, the hostile bishops, inspired by Theophilus and led by Acacius and Severian, took the ground that Chrysostom had incurred deposition by returning to his see under protection of the civil power after having been deposed by a synod. Chrysostom's answer was overwhelmingly cogent. The canon appealed to by his enemies had only been passed by the Arianising Council of Antioch (A.D. 341), influenced by a strong Arian faction, and with no other intention than that of ruining the great Athanasius.[1] Further, it had been contemptuously repealed by the Council of Sardica; and, even if this had not been the case, Chrysostom had been acquitted by sixty-five bishops and only condemned by a miserable and malignant body of thirty-nine. The canon urged against him was therefore invalid and inapplicable. The synod which had pretended to condemn him was illegal and unjust, and he had all along appealed to a general council, not to reverse the decree of the Synod of the Oak, but to proclaim his innocence of the charges which had been trumped up against him. But the righteousness of his cause was of no avail against the hatred of Eudoxia, the stupid sullenness of Arcadius, and the reckless falsehoods of his unscrupulous enemies. Professing to regard Chrysostom's position as illegal, the Emperor refused to communicate at the Christmas festival of 403, and to prevent him from being hindered by the same scruple at Easter, 404, it was decided to suppress Chrysostom at all costs. He could not obey the command to absent himself from the Easter services and so to desert his 3000 catechumens. That Easter-tide of April 16, 404, was polluted by scenes of brutal violence. The soldiery scattered and beat and robbed the assemblies of Christians who refused to recognise the commands of the court to show approval of the degradation of their bishop. The clergy were assaulted and driven out of the baptisteries; the congregations were plundered and beaten; the catechumens were driven half naked into the streets; the consecrated elements of the Eucharist were profaned by Pagan hands; the lustral water of the fonts was stained with blood. Rude Thracian barbarians desecrated the Church of St. Sophia

[1] Socr. ii. 8. The aged and faithful Elpidius, Bishop of Laodicea, greatly embarrassed Acacius and Antiochus, and made them turn livid with rage, by asking whether they would subscribe to the same faith as the majority of the Council of Antioch.

and hunted the worshippers from the baths of Constantine, to which they had adjourned.

During these disastrous weeks Chrysostom was in constant peril. His life was twice attempted; he was imprisoned in his own palace; and at last, on June 5, A.D. 404, in spite of the entreaties of faithful bishops who pleaded his cause with tears and warnings, he was deposed and banished. Arcadius would have been too timid to resort to this last measure had not the four bishops, Acacius, Antiochus, Cyrinus, and Severian, taken the whole responsibility on their own heads. Chrysostom meekly obeyed, saying with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." In order that no blood might be shed, he quietly slipped out of the cathedral by a postern at a distance from the great west door, at which his horse stood waiting, and he surrendered himself secretly after a touching farewell to his weeping friends and deaconesses. He was conveyed to the Asiatic shore, accompanied only by Cyriacus of Synnada and Eulysius of Apamea, and, as Palladius says, "the Angel of the Church went out with him."[1] The golden candlestick of the Church of Constantinople was quenched for many years.

But his precautions were in vain. When it was discovered that the archbishop had yielded to the imperial mandate and had left the city, a riot arose in which the great cathedral was reduced to ashes, and the flames spread to the senate house and calcined many of the Pagan statues in the forum. Chrysostom, who was then in Bithynia, was absurdly charged with the guilt, and, with the two bishops, who were with him, was kept in chains. They were sent to Chalcedon, tried, and found innocent; but every engine of persecution was put into play against Chrysostom's adherents. Arsacius, an old man and a brother of Nectarius, was nominated to the see of Constantinople by the Emperor, though he had taken an oath to his brother that he would never accept a bishopric. He was a man whom Palladius describes as being more dumb than a fish and incapable than a frog,[2] and Simeon Metaphrastes as an old block;[3] yet Arcadius

[1] *Συνεξελθόντος αὐτῷ καὶ τοῦ Ἀγγέλου.* In his last visit to the Church of St. Sophia he had said to his friends, "Come, let us pray and bid farewell to the Angel of the Church."

[2] *Ἰχθύος ἀφωνότερος καὶ βατράχου ἀπραγότερος.* Socrates (vi. 20) and Sozomen (viii. 27) speak of him more favourably.

[3] *Ap.* Niceph. Call. xiii. 26.

threatened confiscation and exile to any bishop who refused to communicate with the feeble Arsacius, the execrable Theophilus, and the bad adventurer Porphyry of Antioch. The faithful Christians who refused to recognise the intruder were maimed, mutilated, and subjected to frightful tortures, under which the presbyter Tigrius and the young reader Eutropius died after the infliction of inhumanities which would have disgraced the Hurons or the Iroquois.[1] The unfortunate archdeacon Serapion, although he was then living in the Thracian Heraclea, of which he had been appointed bishop, well knew that he would be a mark for the fury of Chrysostom's enemies. For a time he concealed himself in a convent of Gothic monks, but when discovered he was taken to Constantinople and tortured. His eyebrows and the skin of his forehead were torn off with pincers, his teeth were pulled out, and he was then banished to Alexandria to be placed under the tender mercies of Theophilus. The deaconesses Olympias and Pentadia were only saved from a similar fate by the dauntlessness with which they confronted their base accusers. Others had all their goods confiscated and were driven into exile and the hardest poverty,[2] while many succumbed to the fear of death and torment, and rendered a nominal allegiance to the new bishop, under whom began that long decline from which the Church of Constantinople never recovered.

[1] One persecuting decree was partly cancelled in Aug. 404, but it was renewed on Sept. 11. Böhringer (*Chrysost.* p. 79) compares the persecution to that of the Jansenists by the Jesuits and the court.

[2] Among these was Briso, brother of Palladius of Helenopolis, Chrysostom's biographer.

XVIII

Continued

CHRYSOSTOM IN EXILE

(A.D. 404-407)

"There did remain another loftier doom—
Pain, travail, exile, peril, scorn, and wrong;
Glorious before, but glorified by these."

ABP. TRENCH, *St. Chrysostom*

SECTION V

MEANWHILE Chrysostom received the open sympathy of all the best men throughout the Church. Innocent I., the great Bishop of Rome,[1] Venerius of Milan, Chromatius of Aquileia, and indeed the whole body of Western bishops, sympathised with him. Innocent rebuked Theophilus, disannulled the deposition of Chrysostom, and nobly used his utmost endeavours to support and console the exile. But the Roman bishop was as powerless as was the Western Emperor to take any effectual steps to remedy these gross acts of intrigue and tyranny. The power of Honorius, even though he had a Stilicho to defend him, was paralysed by the menacing attitude of Alaric and Rhadagaisus, whose armies lowered like thunderclouds upon his frontiers. He sent a deputation of five bishops and a deacon, accompanied by four of the persecuted Eastern bishops, to demand from his brother the summoning of a general council at Thessalonica. But Arcadius knew the impotence to which Honorius was reduced. He treated his episcopal legates with consummate insolence and cruelty, and sent them back unheard, while the

[1] He succeeded to the papacy in May A.D. 402.

four Eastern bishops were exiled to distant places of banishment with every aggravation of insulting malice. Their one consolation was the justice of their cause and the belief that heaven itself was showing its wrath against their persecutors. In Sept. A.D. 404, Constantinople was terrified by an awful hail-storm. Eudoxia died in Oct. 404, after suffering terrible agony and bearing a dead child. Arsacius died on Nov. 11, 405, after a feeble and disgraceful episcopate of only a year and four months. Cyrinus of Chalcedon, after horrible agonies, died about the same time. Another of Chrysostom's episcopal enemies was killed by being thrown from a horse; another died of a purulent dropsy; a third of severe erysipelas; a fourth of cancer in the tongue, after confessing the crime of which he had been guilty. When Arcadius wrote to Mount Sinai to ask the prayers of Nilus, the hermit refused to pray for the persecutor of Chrysostom or for the city which God was visiting with retributive judgment of fire and earthquake.[1]

Arsacius was succeeded by an equally commonplace bishop named Atticus, but the persecution still raged in the wretched Church of Constantinople. Meanwhile, on June 20, Chrysostom was removed to Nice,[2] and, on July 4, was informed that his destination was to be the bleak and paltry village of Cucusus, in Lesser Armenia, in one of the valleys of Mount Taurus, a place not only remote and lonely but harassed by incessant inroads of Isaurian marauders, to whose attacks it was perhaps secretly hoped by Eudoxia that he would fall a victim, either on the journey or after his arrival.[3]

But amid all his trials and miseries, Chrysostom continued to labour for the Church to the utmost of his power. Sickness of body and anguish of mind seemed alike to vanish when there was work to be done for Christ. The missions in Phoenicia and the discouragement of heresy greatly occupied his thoughts during the brief interval between his detention at Nice and the beginning of July when he started for his place of exile. The itinerary of his journey had been purposely drawn up in such a way as to cost him the utmost misery. Sick, weary, forced to feed on black bread steeped in unwholesome water, shaking with

[1] Nilus, *Ep.* ccxxxiii.

[2] The friends who accompanied him had been chained and sent back to Constantinople.

[3] Cucusus, now *Cocsou*, was sixty-two miles from Comana of Cappadocia.

feverish ague, he was in constant peril from his ecclesiastical and other enemies. Leontius, Bishop of Ancyra, unmollified even by the affliction of the great man whom he had helped to ruin, terrified him with threats of violence as he traversed the burning and treeless wastes.[1] He complained that his hardships were worse than those of the convicts who worked in chains in the public mines.[2] "The bishops," he writes, "except a few, were his chief terror."[3] But he was consoled at times by the sympathy of friends, and he at last reached the Cappadocian Caesarea. There he was welcomed with warm enthusiasm by the people, but was subjected to the shameful craftiness of the bishop, Pharetrius, who was trying to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. This man, who disgraced the chair of St. Basil, under the guise of friendly hospitality seems to have goaded the brutal monks of the district to attack the house in which the exile was trying to recover from his exhaustion. Hunted from house to house by the episcopal plotter, he at last had to make his escape at midnight along the dark and rugged mountain paths. Torches could not be used for fear of the Isaurians; his mule stumbled, and he was raised from the ground in a swoon that resembled death. When roused, he could only be half-led, half-dragged along by the hand of his friend, the presbyter Evethius. During the remainder of the journey he was tended also by a physician who accompanied him from Caesarea. It took him thirty days more of painful travel to reach Cucusus, but at this miserable frontier village, bleak and imperilled as it was, he found kindness and sympathy which cheered his weary heart. The bishop, Adelphius, treated him with veneration, and Dioscorus, the leading resident of the town, gave up to him his house, and did his utmost to render it acceptable to the great sufferer. Visitors from Antioch, and even from Constantinople, came to see him, and his friends took care that his wants should be as well supplied as the circumstances of the place permitted. A mass of correspondence remains to us, in which he pours out his heart to Olympias and other friends, upholding their courage by his own indomitable energy and resignation. When a man thus reveals his inmost heart he will inevitably betray some of his own personal defects and weaknesses as well as those which are

[1] See Chrys. *Ep.* xiv. *ad Olymp.*
[2] *Ep.* cxx. *ad Theodos.* [3] *Ep.* xiv.

the *vitia temporis non hominis*. We have to make occasional allowance for Oriental exaggeration of eulogy, and for opinions which are not always expressed with the theological caution and precision which mark his more serious writings; but these letters reveal to us a picture of a good and great man confronting his destiny in the purest spirit, and rising superior to the temptation to yield to unmanly complaints.

For three years he continued to write and to toil amid deep privations and cruel infirmities, yet not uncheered by the sense of God's presence, and consoled by the ardent sympathy of a great part of the Christian world. He corresponded with the Bishops of Jerusalem, Scythopolis, Adana, Corinth, Thessalonica, and many other cities both in the East and West, and with many bodies of monks. He also corresponded with the Bishops of Carthage, Milan, Aquileia, Brescia, and Rome. To Innocent I. he wrote, in the third year of his exile, that "amid exile, famine, war, pestilence, sieges, indescribable solitudes, and daily perils from the swords of the Isaurians, he was consoled and delighted by his charity." His enemies soon became discontented with the measure of their triumph. "See," they said, "this dead man who scares the living and his conquerors."[1] Chrysostom at Cucusus still continued to be greater, more influential, and more beloved than Atticus at Constantinople, and the attention of the Church was transferred from the capital of the Empire to an Armenian village. "All Antioch is at Cucusus," was the angry comment of Porphyry of Antioch. It was determined once more to strike a blow at his happiness and influence. That the truest saint and greatest orator of the Church should be afflicted with sickness by the inclemency of his place of exile, and agitated by constant apprehension of the surrounding brigands, was too little for the revenge of the clique who had resolved upon his destruction. And yet the severity of his sufferings might have moved to pity a heart of stone. In the winter of 405, the inhabitants of Cucusus were so terrified by the threats of the Isaurians that the majority of them fled. Chrysostom shared their flight, and after a terrible journey amid snow-encumbered passes and frozen forests, he reached Arabissus, a famine-stricken fort which was worse than a prison. There he suffered some months of extreme torment. But for the acts of kindness which he received, and

[1] Ἴδετε νεκρὸν φοβερὸν τοὺς ζῶντας καὶ κρατοῦντας διαπτοῦντα.—Pallad. *Dial.* 11; see Chrys. *Epp.* 69-127.

especially the loving care of Evethius and of his relative the deaconess Sabiniana of Antioch—who had followed him to Cucusus—he would probably have succumbed earlier to the miseries of his lot. The order went forth in June 407 that he was to be hurried with the utmost speed by two praetorian soldiers to Pityus on the Eastern Euxine. To compel an old man of sixty, enfeebled by asceticism, misfortune, and illness, to take such a journey on foot was a horrible act of persecution. Indeed, his guards seem to have received express directions to hurry the martyr pitilessly onward, with every form of insult and hardship, fever-stricken and bareheaded under the blazing sunlight, in the hopes that he might die on the journey without its being called murder. In spite of a little relenting on the part of one of the two "leopards," the order was brutally carried out. When they had got five miles beyond Comana, in Pontus,[1] the archbishop was so ill that they were compelled to stop at the martyry of Basiliscus, and it is said that the martyred bishop appeared to Chrysostom to cheer him with the promise of a speedy relief from his sufferings. Next morning, in spite of his pitiable condition, the exile was once more ruthlessly hurried on his way, but after his guards had dragged him along for a short distance, he was so evidently a dying man that he was taken back to the martyry.[2] He was clothed by his own request in the white robes of baptism, and, after receiving the Eucharist, died, on Sept. 14, 407, with the memorable words upon his lips—

"Δόξα τῷ Θεῷ πάντων ἕνεκα. Ἀμήν."
Glory to God for all things. Amen.

He was buried as a martyr in the martyr's grave.[3] He was sixty years old. For three years and three months he had been an exile, and for nine years and six months a bishop. Arcadius died nine months later. In 412 Theophilus was found dead in his bed, and in the same year died his like-minded accomplice in intrigue and crime, Porphyry of Antioch. Theophilus, in the letter which Jerome disgraced himself by translating into Latin,

[1] Now Gumeulk, about seven miles north-east of Tocat.

[2] The circumstances of the death of Chrysostom curiously resemble in some features the death of Henry Martyn. He too was inexorably hurried through the same region by an unrelenting guide, in spite of fatigue and fever, and he died at Tocat.

[3] Athanasius had died in 373, Basil in 379, Gregory of Nazianzus in 390 Diodorus of Tarsus in 394, Gregory of Nyssa in 395, Ambrose in 397.

had described Chrysostom as an impure demon, whose words rolled in a torrent of filth; a traitor, like Judas; a man who, like Satan, had transformed himself into an angel of light, who had persecuted his brethren with the infernal spirit of Saul; a man stained, impious, corrupted, mad; a madman whose crimes were worse than those of brigands, and the enemy of mankind. God has judged and posterity has judged between these two men. Theophilus is regarded as nearly the worst character among the many bad bishops of this epoch. Of Chrysostom it may be said that "fools thought his life madness and his end to be without honour;—how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot among the saints!"

Then began the tardy repentance of the Church, which had for the most part acquiesced in his disgraceful persecution. Even Atticus, his unworthy successor in the see, was compelled, in 414, to restore his name to the diptychs of the Church, which was a practical recognition of his innocence, and of the illegality of his deposition. More than thirty years after his death (A.D. 438), the Emperor Theodosius II. consented to the translation of his remains from Comana to Constantinople. His ashes were buried near the altar in the Church of the Apostles, and, bending over them, the Emperor and his sister Pulcheria implored that the wrongs which their parents had inflicted on this great saint of God might be forgiven. The fathers murder the prophets; the sons build their tombs.

It would be impossible to enter into a detailed account of the numerous works of this most voluminous and most eloquent of the Fathers; but we may briefly glance at the general characteristics of his writings.

They fall into four classes:—

1. Treatises, and Letters which assume the dimensions of treatises.

These chiefly belong to his early days. I have already spoken of his letter to Theodore (*ad Theodorum lapsum*), and other writings of a monastic and ascetic tendency. By far the most important book of this period is that *On the Priesthood*, in six books, which is the most popular and best known of all his writings.[1]

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[1] Jerome, in his *De Viris illustribus* (ch. 129), devotes a line and a half to Chrysostom, in which he says: "Multa componere *dicitur*, de quibus περὶ

To this fruitful period belong his treatise against those who oppose the monastic life; the letters "to an unfaithful" and "to a faithful father," in the latter of which he draws so frightful a picture of the morals of Antioch; his comparison between a king and a monk; his exhortations to Stagirius and Stelechius; to "a young widow"; his book *On Virginity;* and his biography of the Antiochene martyr St. Babylas (founded mainly on floating tradition).

2. Exegetical Writings.—As an exegete Chrysostom attained his purest fame. Many of his commentaries have perished. They appear to have covered the whole field of Scripture, and are mostly in the form of homilies. The most important of those now extant are the 67 homilies on Genesis (A.D. 386); the 90 on St. Matthew; the 33 on the Epistle to the Romans; and the 74 on the two Epistles to the Corinthians. Those on the Acts of the Apostles are the poorest, though Erasmus goes beyond the mark when he says of them: "Ebrius et stertens scriberem meliora." His expository sermons exceed 600 in number.

As an interpreter of Scripture, Chrysostom is the chief glory of the school of Antioch. That school, beginning, perhaps, with Malchion (A.D. 269), continued by Lucian and Diodore of Tarsus, can boast of the great names of Theodore of Mopsuestia and his brother Polychronius of Apamea, of Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrus, and of Chrysostom, whom Theodoret calls "the great teacher of the world." For sobriety of interpretation, for thorough general knowledge of the contents of Scripture, for his steady determination to elicit the sense of the sacred writers, and not to introduce into them a meaning of his own, Chrysostom is unrivalled. He fully recognised the human element in Scripture, and he was thus better able to see the importance of studying every passage with its context, and of estimating the special usage of words. No writer has contributed so large an amount to the current catenae, or exercised a more wholesome influence upon the traditions of interpretation.[1]

3. Of Chrysostom's Sermons few are directly and exclusively doctrinal, though there are 12 against the Anomoeans and 8 against the Jews. His occasional homilies, especially those *On the Statues*, show the full splendour of his eloquence as an unrivalled preacher. His panegyrical homilies are less pleasing, from the Oriental extravagance of adulation. Both at Antioch and at Constantinople he endeavoured to wield the utmost power of the Christian pulpit for the purposes of spiritual edification and moral reform. If he was

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ἱερωσύνης tantum legi." He was afterwards guilty of translating and praising the shameful libel of Theophilus, of which fragments are preserved by Facundus of Hermiane (*Def. trium. capp.* vi.)

[1] In the brief space at my disposal in the *History of Interpretation* (pp. 220-222) I referred to the chief characteristics of his exegesis, and to some of the authoritative opinions as to his importance. Since that time Mr. Chase, in his *Chrysostom, a study in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, 1887, has devoted a full and valuable monograph to the subject.

occasionally carried away by the passion of the successful orator into the use of unmeasured and ill-considered expressions, we can hardly be surprised. Sermons in the fourth century were harangues addressed to an eager and excitable multitude. The unseemly custom of expressing applause or disapproval had triumphed over all remonstrances. To some preachers it gave a fatal pleasure; on all preachers alike it exercised an unfavourable influence. Chrysostom frequently alludes to the laughter, the tears, or the stamping (κρότος) of his hearers. He deplores the levity with which they left the churches to plunge afresh into the very vices of which the denunciation had just aroused their cheers. Indeed, none of his sermons was more loudly applauded than one in which he had strongly reprehended the custom of thus venting their feelings, and thus turning sermons into mere oratorical displays. But if the custom of applauding in church was now general, it must have been difficult for an Eastern audience to restrain themselves while they listened to the masterpieces of an eloquence so noble, so natural, and so vivid, as that which was poured forth with equal ardour and facility by this "mouth of gold." We cannot wonder that eloquence so powerful saved Antioch, swayed the vicious populace, overawed the barbarians, and flung a last gleam of radiance over the corrupt and degraded Empire. As a preacher he was unwearied in his assiduity, and the pulpit was the chief engine of his spiritual force.

His sermons have none of the severe order and powerful logic which mark those of Bourdaloue, nor the finish and sublimity which we admire respectively in Massillon and Bossuet, but they were probably far more adapted to the taste of those days and the countries in which he laboured. Their *abandon*, and directness, the abundance of their imagery, the ardour of their sentiments, the passion of their appeals, the Asiatic luxuriance of their language, may sometimes interfere with their perfection as works of art, but undoubtedly added to the sole effectiveness which Chrysostom desired for them—the effectiveness of being practically useful in spreading the kingdom of God.

We know that he prepared his sermons with much care, but in form many of them must have been extempore, for he was often called upon suddenly to occupy the pulpit. Occasionally too he burst into an extempore digression, as when in his fourth homily on Genesis he reproves the people for looking away from him, and giving their whole attention to the acolyte who was lighting the lamps.

One great charm of his eloquence consisted in its vivid plainness. He was not an orator who beat the air, or who dealt in sounding generalities which hurt the consciences of no one. He dealt downright blows at the vices of the clergy, the court, the millionaires, and the multitudes. It is chiefly from his pages that we learn the consummate splendour and slothful voluptuousness which marked the life of the wealthy, and the consequent decadence of all manly nobleness among them; but we have pictures no less vivid of the vices and amusements of the vulgar, the debasements and the pollutions of the theatre, and the frantic partisanship of the hippodrome. He shows us even

that the rope-dancers, jugglers, and mountebanks performed much the same tricks fifteen centuries ago as they do in London streets to-day.[1]

4. The Letters of Chrysostom—242 in number—belong chiefly to the period of his exile (A.D. 403-407). The most important of them are the 17 letters to Olympias, and the 2 to Pope Innocent I. They are full of interesting autobiographical notices, and they give us a thorough insight into his episcopal activity, as well as into the beauty and grandeur of his character. While they often describe his misfortunes, they never breathe the unmanly spirit of complaint, nor do they show any hatred to his enemies. The famine, war, pestilence, continuous assaults, boundless solitude, barbarian incursions, and daily death, of which he speaks to Innocent, did not break down his indomitable faith, or make him unworthy of himself.

As a theologian Chrysostom thoroughly deserves his place among the four great doctors of the Greek Church.[2]

Isaac Taylor, whose judgments on the Fathers are too severe, sees in his writings the conflict between opposing tendencies—evangelical and ecclesiastical. "Few great writers," he says, "offer so little repose; few present contrasts so violent; as if his cynosure had been a binary star, shedding contrary influences upon his course."[3]

Fortunately for his usefulness and peace of mind, he lived in that period in which there was a lull between the two fierce series of controversies on the Trinity and on the twofold nature of Christ.

In the practical tendency of his writings he is more allied to the great teachers of the West, just as Augustine, by the speculative turn of his mind, is allied to the teachers of the East. "In the nature and personality of this Father is revealed alike the Greek and the Christian, the twin-force, the double light of beauty and of love." The very centre of his theology was that he "believed in the soul, and was very sure of God"; and there was no truth which more needed to be impressed on the age in which he lived than the infinite value of each human soul. He treats every question with a view to immediate edification; and for the inflexibility of his censorship over morals has been called "the Christian Cato." But his chief power lay in the loftiness of his ideal and in his thorough knowledge of Holy Writ. He was not a great ecclesiastical statesman like Ambrose. He was not a reformer of superstitions—indeed in many of the superstitions of his age he shared. He was neither a Luther, nor a Paul, nor a John, though he has often been called "another John." The tone of his teaching more resembled that of the Epistle of St. James.[4] He has been compared with Fénelon and Spener, but he was far greater than either in eloquence and genius, though of a less gentle disposition.

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[1] See Montfaucon's *Chrys.* ii. 232, vii. 422, xiii. 193; Bingham, Bk. xiv. 4.

[2] I do not mention his "Liturgy," which is based on St. Basil's, and "it is doubtful whether it can be even in part ascribed to St. Chrysostom."

[3] *Ancient Christianity*, i. 249.

[4] See Böhringer, *Chrysost.* p. 159.

The only heresy with which he was charged was an inclination to Origenism, of which he was far less guilty than his assailants Theophilus and Jerome. He had, indeed, been trained by so illustrious a leader of the school of Antioch as Diodorus of Tarsus, and he had spent his youth among men who did justice to the unrivalled merits of the great Alexandrian. But, unlike most of the Greek Fathers, Chrysostom had little or no fondness for allegory or abstract speculation. The whole turn of his mind was practical. In later days he might have been charged with Pelagianism or Nestorianism; but, in point of fact, he wrote on topics which touched on those views in much the same way as had been done by others before the actual controversies had arisen. He had no time for the elaboration of theological theories and definitions. Neander has truly pointed to him as one in whose teaching dogma and ethics, exegesis and practical exhortation, were admirably combined. "Hence his exegesis was guarded against barren philosophy and dogma, and his pulpit discourses were free from doctrinal abstraction and empty rhetoric." A worthy pupil alike of Diodorus and of Libanius, he subordinated both the methods of his interpretation and the fervour of his oratory to the one object of furthering the spiritual growth of his hearers.

St. Chrysostom, like St. Athanasius, was a man of small stature, pale, emaciated, wrinkled, bald, with piercing but deep-set eyes.

In art St. Chrysostom is usually represented with the Three other great Greek Fathers—St. Athanasius, St. Basil, and St. Gregory of Nazianzus. The two finest pictures in which he is separately represented are that by Sebastian del Piombo over the high altar of San Gian Grisostomo in Venice, and that by Rubens. "He is in the habit of a Greek bishop; in one hand he holds the sacramental cup, and the left hand rests on the gospel. The celestial dove hovers near him, and two angels are in attendance."

The pictures of Lucas Cranach, Behan, Albrecht Dürer, representing "the penitence of St. John Chrysostom," are either due to some confusion of him with another John, or are due to stories invented by ignorant monks who knew no more of the great orator than they learnt from the abusive letter of Theophilus, and its translation into Latin by St. Jerome.[1]

In parting with St. Chrysostom we part with one of the noblest, wisest, and most eloquent of the Fathers. I have endeavoured to set them before the reader truthfully, as they were. I have not painted them with any imaginary aureole around their brows, but as they stand in the truth of history, noble men, but, like all men, imperfect; saints, yet like even the greatest of the saints, also sinners. "What are the saints," says Luther, "compared with Christ? They are but shining dew-

[1] See Mrs. Jameson, *Sacred and Legendary Art*, pp. 325-335.

drops in the locks of the bridegroom, entangled among his hair." No true man would wish to be described with artificial reverence or indiscriminate eulogy. At the same time, all men would wish to have their story told by one who feels for them a profound respect and admiration—as I have always felt for these Fathers and Teachers—rather than by one who adopts a hostile, cold, or unsympathising attitude. It is at once our duty and our happiness, as Ernesti rightly says, "*in viris egregiis bona potius quaerere atque laudare, quam mala indagare et reprehendere.*" It is in that spirit that I have endeavoured to make these leaders and champions of the Church of the first four centuries better known —not to scholars who are thoroughly familiar with Church history and biography—but to many of my fellow-countrymen for whom the characters and events of those centuries have been in great measure a sealed book.

NOTES ON THE EARLY BISHOPS OF ROME OF THE FIRST FOUR CENTURIES[1]

"Non fu la Sposa di Cristo allevata
Del sangue mio, di Lin, di quel di Cleto
Per essere ad acquisto d'oro usata:
Ma per acquisto d'esto viver lieto
E Sisto, e Pio, Callisto, ed Urbano
Sparser lo sangue dopo molto fleto."
DANTE, *Parad.* xxvii. 40-46.

1. The Apostle ST. PETER is claimed in the Pseudo-Clementines as the first Bishop of Rome, but on grounds purely traditional. We find from the Acts of the Apostles that he was at Jerusalem A.D. 49, and in Antioch about A.D. 53. The Epistles, taken in conjunction with the Acts, seem to prove that he was not at Rome during the first or second imprisonments of St. Paul. If "Babylon" in 1 Peter v. 13 means Babylon, and is not a cryptogram for Rome—which cannot be positively proved—then St. Peter was in Babylon about A.D. 63. That he was not the actual *founder* of the Church of Rome is clearly indicated by St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. It cannot be proved that he ever visited Rome before A.D. 63, but the strength of tradition makes it highly probable that he died in Rome. The presbyter Gaius, in the second century, refers to the "trophies" of St. Peter and St. Paul as visible in the Via Ostia. But that Peter was in any sense of the word "Bishop" of Rome, or even of the Jewish community of Rome, for twenty-five years (the famous "years of St. Peter" first exceeded by Pius IX., who was Pope from 1846-1878) is an assertion absolutely without foundation. We may mention generally that according to Roman tradition all the first thirty Popes except two (Anteros and Dionysius) were martyrs. Irenaeus, however, only mentions Telesphorus as a martyr, and we have no certain evidence of any other martyred Pope till the eighteenth—Pontianus.

Spurious decretals and letters are attributed to many of these Popes in the forgeries of Pseudo-Isidore, which, though now disowned by all respectable authorities, were for centuries of immense use in supporting the Papal pretensions.

2. LINUS, *c.* A.D. 62.—He is identified by Irenaeus with the Linus who

[1] *Ap.* Euseb. *H. E.* xi. 25.

sends greetings to Timothy in 2 Tim. iv. 21, and is said (Euseb. iii. 13) to have been bishop for twelve years. The Acts of the Martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul attributed to him are spurious.

3. Cletus or Anencletus, *c.* A.D. 79.—Of this bishop nothing is known.

4. Clement of Rome, *c.* A.D. 91.—He is precariously identified by Origen and others with the Philippian Clement mentioned by St. Paul (Phil. iv. 3), and is the author of the Epistle to the Corinthians, known only through the Alexandrian MS. presented by the Patriarch Cyril Lucar to Charles I. in 1625. A second epistle was discovered by Bishop Bryennios in 1875, but is in reality a fragment of a very ordinary homily, and is as little genuine as the two encyclical letters on virginity, and the other pseudo-Clementine writings — the Liturgy, the Apostolical Constitutions and Canons, the Homilies, Recognitions, and the decretal letters. The story of his martyrdom is spurious.

5. Evaristus, *c.* A.D. 100.—He is said to have been a Greek of Antioch, to have divided Rome into parishes, and appointed deacons.

6. Alexander I. *c.* A.D. 109.—Nothing is known of this bishop.

7. Sixtus or Xystus, *c.* A.D. 109.—He is said to have been martyred in the cemetery of Praetextatus. To him are attributed the *Proverbs*, which are more probably the work of the Stoic philosopher of that name.

8. Telesphorus, *c.* A.D. 128.—He is the first Bishop of Rome who is mentioned as a martyr by Irenaeus (*Haer.* iii. 3). He is said to have been the first who ordered the keeping of the Lenten fast.

9. Hyginus, *c.* A.D. 139.—Nothing is known about him, but it was during his episcopate that the heretics Valentinus and Cerdon came to Rome.

10. Pius I. *c.* A.D. 142.—During his rule Marcion arrived at Rome and extended the teaching of Cerdon. Hermas is said to have been his brother, and to have written his *Shepherd* at this time.

11. Anicetus, *c.* A.D. 157.—He is the bishop who kindly received Polycarp on his visit to Rome, and respected his Quartodeciman practice (see *supra*, i. 60). At this period occurred the martyrdom of Ptolemaeus and Lucius, narrated by Justin Martyr (2 *Apol.* 2).

12. Soter, *c.* A.D. 168.—Dionysius of Corinth speaks of his generosity in assisting those who were reduced to poverty and condemned to the mines during the persecution of M. Aurelius. During his episcopacy Montanism began to appear.

13. Eleutherus, *c.* A.D. 177.—He was, according to Hegesippus (*ap.* Euseb. *H. E.* iv. 22), originally a deacon of Anicetus. It was to him that the Christians of Lyons and Vienne sent by the hands of Irenaeus their plea for gentle dealings with the Montanists. He is supposed to be the bishop who, as Tertullian tells us (*c. Prax.* i.), was inclined to pay attention to the

prophecies of the Montanists until he was perverted by the arrival of Praxeas (see *supra*, i. 73). During his episcopacy Valentinus and Marcion were twice excommunicated at Rome, and Florinus and Blastus were degraded. According to Bede, he sent teachers to Britain at the request of King Lucius.

14. Victor I. *c.* A.D. 190.—For his imperious action towards the Asiatic Quartodecimans, and the letters of Polycrates and Irenaeus to him, see *supra*, i. 74, 182. It is clear that by his arrogant intolerance in this matter he gave general offence. According to Eusebius (*H. E.* v. 28) he excommunicated the Byzantine shoemaker Theodotus, the first Gentile convert who denied the Divinity of Christ.

15. Zephyrinus, A.D. 202.[1]—During his weak rule he seems to have been under the influence of Callistus, and though he opposed Montanism he did not keep equally clear from Monarchianism. His name is chiefly remembered in connexion with Hippolytus, who spoke of him with great contempt (see *supra*, i. 88), and if he be the Bishop of Rome angrily referred to by Tertullian, he most seriously relaxed the bonds of ancient discipline by freely admitting heinous offenders into Church communion. The heretic Artemon gained a following at Rome in his days, and Origen paid a visit to Rome. It is difficult to judge of Zephyrinus, because we only know him through the reports of his theological opponents. The curious story of Natalis, the heretical Theodotian bishop who repented after being scourged by the angels, is connected with this period.

16. Callistus, A.D. 218.—If we are to believe the story told of Callistus by his rival Hippolytus, he had been a slave of Carpophorus, a Christian of Caesar's household, and had been intrusted with the charge of a bank. Detected in fraudulent dealing with the money deposited by his fellow-Christians, he escaped on board ship, was followed by Carpophorus, and in despair attempted to commit suicide by throwing himself into the sea. Rescued from this fate, he was scourged by Carpophorus and sent into a *pistrinum* or slave-mill. Liberated on the pretext of recovering money from his creditors to repay the sums which he had embezzled, he raised a riot in a Jewish synagogue, and was condemned to the mines of Sardinia by the City Praefect Fuscianus. When Marcia, the *θεοσεβὴς παλλάκη* of Commodus, procured the liberation of the banished Christians, he got himself released though he was not on the list of those who were amnestied. Victor, to get rid of him, sent him to Antium, and gave him a monthly allowance. Zephyrinus, perhaps needing the aid of his practical ability, recalled him, made him a sort of archdeacon among the clergy, and set him over the cemetery which still goes by the name of St. Callistus, in which thirteen out of eighteen of the Roman bishops of this period are buried. In this position he fomented the dissensions of the Church, hoping to play off one party against another to his own advantage. He personally sided with Sabellius, urged him farther

[1] The dates cannot always be regarded as certain.

and farther into Monarchianism, called Hippolytus a ditheist, and put vacillating and ambiguous utterances into the mouth of Zephyrinus. By the aid of these intrigues he got himself elected Bishop of Rome on the death of Zephyrinus, A.D. 218. He then expelled Sabellius and proclaimed a new heresy, saying that the Father and the Son were one, who together made the Spirit which became incarnate in the Virgin's womb. Further, he went to still greater lengths in relaxing Church discipline; admitted digamists and even trigamists to marriage, relaxed marriage laws in general, and allowed second baptisms.

Such is the dark story of St. Callistus told by St. Hippolytus. We may safely believe that it was capable of a much more innocent interpretation, but we do not know the real facts. According to tradition, Callistus was martyred A.D. 223, having been scourged in a popular rising, thrown out of the window of his house, and flung into a well. This may be true, since his epitaph is not found among those of the Popes buried in his own cemetery.

17. URBAN I. A.D. 223.—The name of this bishop is mixed up by tradition with that of St. Caecilia, whose husband Valerian, and his brother Tiburtius, he is said to have converted and baptized. In the late Acts of his Martyrdom he is said to have led to 5000 martyrdoms by his teaching and encouragement, and to have been beaten and imprisoned for accepting the legacy of St. Caecilia's possessions, which he distributed among the poor. He converted his jailor Aurelinus, and was beheaded.

18. PONTIANUS, A.D. 230.—He was banished with Hippolytus to the mines of Sardinia in the persecution of Maximus, and there died. This was probably the Pope who consented to the condemnation of Origen by Demetrius (see *supra*, i. 307).

19. ANTEROS, A.D. 234.—He is said to have been Pope for only a month, from Nov. 21, A.D. 235, to Jan. 3, A.D. 236.

20. FABIAN, A.D. 236.—He is said to have been an unknown layman from the country, and only to have been marked out for consecration by a dove settling on his head (Euseb. *H. E.* vi. *sqq.*) The story is suspicious, for a similar story is related of Zephyrinus (Rufinus, *H. E.* vi. 21). Legend says with great improbability that he baptized the Emperor Philip and his son. That he died by martyrdom is attested by Cyprian (*Ep.* 39), and he was one of the first victims of the Decian persecution (Jan. 256). Fragments of his memorial slab have been found in the "Papal Crypt" of the catacomb of St. Callistus.

21. CORNELIUS, A.D. 251.—His acceptance of the bishopric showed courage, for, as Cyprian says (*Ep.* lv. 7), "He sat fearless at Rome in the sacerdotal chair, at that time when a tyrant, a persecutor of the priests of God (Decius), . . . would with more patience hear that a rival prince was raised against himself than a bishop of God established at Rome." His differences with Cyprian and his relations to Novatus and Novatian (the

Antipope) are narrated in the Life of Cyprian (see *supra*, i. 226). He died in exile at Centumcellae, and is regarded as a martyr.

22. Lucius I. A.D. 252.—He underwent a short banishment in the Decian persecution (Cyprian, *Ep.* lxi.) He is said to have been beheaded by Valerian.

23. Stephen I. A.D. 253.—For the views of this haughty bishop, see the Life of Cyprian (*supra*, i. 236, 237), who came into conflict with him on the questions of the rebaptism of heretics and matters of discipline. Both Cyprian and Firmilian speak of him with severity. He is said to have been martyred under Valerian, as he sat in his episcopal chair in the cemetery.

24. Sixtus II. A.D. 257.—He was martyred in the cemetery of Praetextatus in the reign of Valerian, Aug. 6, 258. Cyprian (*Ep.* 80) speaks of him in contrast with Stephen, as "*bonus et pacificus sacerdos*," and his conciliatory tone restored peace to the Church. The deacon St. Laurence was perhaps associated with him in martyrdom (Ambrose, *De off. Minist.* i. 41), as were the deacons Agapetus, Felicissimus, and others (see *supra*, i. 238.)

25. Dionysius, A.D. 269.—He was a Greek by birth, and is chiefly known by his correspondence with Dionysius of Alexandria (see *supra*, i. 347).

26. Felix I. A.D. 269.—The most important event in which he was concerned was the deposition of Paul of Samosata from the see of Antioch.

27. Eutychian, A.D. 275.—He is said to have appointed the blessing of fruits upon the altar, and to have buried 462 martyrs.

28. Caius, A.D. 283.—Little or nothing is known of him.

29. Marcellinus, A.D. 296.—He was charged by the Donatists with having sacrificed and given up sacred books in the Diocletian persecution, but it is said that after a few days repented and was beheaded. Augustine treats the charge as a calumny (*c. lit. Petit.* ii. 202). In the Roman breviary (April 26) we are told that among three hundred assembled bishops no one dared to condemn him. They therefore exclaimed, "*Tuo te ore, non nostro judicio, judica, nam prima sedes a nemine judicatur*"; whereupon he did so, with ashes on his head. The whole story is a later invention (see Döllinger, *Papst. Fabeln*, p. 50). After his death there was a vacancy in the see for some years.

30. Marcellus, A.D. 308.—The legend about him is that, after being beaten with cudgels by Maxentius for refusing to sacrifice, he was made to tend the imperial horses in a church which had been turned into a stable.

31. Eusebius, A.D. 310.—After four months he was banished by Maxentius to Sicily, and died there. The tumults which caused his banishment may have risen on the question of re-admitting those who had lapsed in the Diocletian persecution.

32. Melchiades, A.D. 311.—In his episcopacy took place the conversion

of Constantine the Great and the close of the Diocletian persecution. The Christian cemeteries were restored to his keeping. The edict of toleration at Milan was promulgated by Constantine and Licinius, A.D. 313. Constantine wrote to him a letter full of vexation about the Donatist dissensions, which is preserved by Eusebius. Augustine warmly praises his gentleness and equity (*Ep.* 43). In A.D. 314 he summoned the Synod of Arles to end the controversy. The Donatists falsely charged him with having surrendered the sacred books, and so being a *traditor*.

33. SYLVESTER I. A.D. 314.—He was represented at the Council of Arles by two of his presbyters, but the letter addressed to him by the council is probably spurious or interpolated. At the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, he was unable to be present through age, but sent two presbyters (see *supra*, i. 355). The legend of him says that he cured Constantine of a leprosy and baptized him, having received in reward that "Donation of Constantine" which was regarded for centuries as the foundation for the Pope's temporal power. The forgery is now unanimously rejected. Every one will recall Milton's translations from Dante—

> "Ah Constantine, of how much ill was cause,
> Not thy conversion but those rich domains
> That the first wealthy Pope received of thee!"

and from Ariosto—

> "Then passed he to a flowery mountain green,
> Which once smelled sweet, now stinks as odiously;
> This was the gift, if you the truth will have,
> Which Constantine to good Sylvester gave."

34. MARCUS, A.D. 336.—He appears as a saint and confessor, but little is known of him.

35. JULIUS I. A.D. 337.—He was the friend and defender of Athanasius, and received the recantation of his two bitter opponents, Valens and Ursacius. His letters to the followers of Eusebius and the Alexandrians are still extant (see *supra*, i. 389-393).

36. LIBERIUS, A.D. 352.—An account of this Pope, of his first constancy and orthodoxy and subsequent fall, will be found in the Lives of Hilary and Athanasius. Several of his letters are still extant, as well as a discourse on virginity preserved by Ambrose (*De Virginibus*, iii. 1), and delivered when his sister Marcellina made her profession of virginity (see *supra*, i. 398, 399).

37. DAMASUS, A.D. 366.—An account of this literary and powerful Pope, together with some notice of the Antipopes Felix and Ursinus, will be found in the Life of Jerome (*supra*, p. 193).

38. SIRICIUS, A.D. 384.—He issued the first genuine Papal decretal on matters of discipline in the Spanish Church, and was the first to use—even more haughtily than Victor and Stephen—the arrogant language of Roman dominance founded on the supposed succession of St. Peter. He took strong

measures against the Manicheans and against Jovinian. He was unfavourably disposed to Jerome and patronised Rufinus. He gave the first powerful impulse to the compulsory celibacy of the clergy (see *supra*, pp. 220-255).

39. Anastasius I. a.d. 398.—Rufinus referred to him in the controversy about Origen, and Anastasius in reply condemned Origen (see *supra*, p. 256).

40. Innocent I. a.d. 402.—In a.d. 404 Honorius retired to Ravenna, which greatly increased the power of the Popes at Rome. He asserted his claims to dominance in Illyria, Gaul, Spain, and Africa, and the East. He supported the claims of St. Chrysostom against his opponents (see Life of St. Chrysostom, *supra*, p. 520). He was absent from Rome during its disastrous sack by Alaric, Aug. 24, 410.

41. Zosimus, a.d. 417.—He first tolerated but finally rejected Pelagianism (see the Life of St. Augustine, *supra*, p. 413). He also interfered in the affairs of Gaul, where he endeavoured to secure metropolitan jurisdiction to the see of Arles.

42. Boniface I. a.d. 418.—Eulalius had been consecrated at the same time by three bishops, and Honorius, on the report of the Praefect Symmachus, decided in his favour. But the people sided with Boniface, and his election was ratified. He supported Augustine against the calumnies of the Pelagians, and sent him the slanderous letters to which Augustine replied (*Ep.* x. 411). He was a strenuous maintainer of the rights of the Roman see.

43. Celestine I. a.d. 422.

44. Sixtus III. a.d. 432.

45. Leo the Great, a.d. 440.

EARLY BISHOPS OF ALEXANDRIA[1]

St. Mark	c. A.D. 40	*Heraclas*[1]	231
Anianus	62	*Dionysius*[1]	247
Albinus	84	Maximus	265
Cerdo	98	Theonas	282
Primus	102	Peter Martyr	300
Justin	119	Achillas	312
Eumenius	136	*Alexander*[1]	313
Marcian	143	*Athanasius*[1]	326
Claudius	153	*Peter II.*[1]	373
Agrippinus	167	Timothy	380
Julian	179	*Theophilus*[1]	385
Demetrius[1]	189	Cyril	412

[1] The list is taken from Le Quien's *Oriens Christianus* and Dr. Neale's *Holy Eastern Church*. Some account of these bishops will be found in the Lives of Origen, Athanasius, and Chrysostom.

EARLY BISHOPS OF ANTIOCH[1]

St. Peter.
Euodius.
St. Ignatius.[2]
Heron.
Cornelius.
Eros.
Theophilus.
Maximus.
Serapion.
Asclepiades.
Philetus.
Zebennus.
St. Babylas.
Fabius.
Demetrius.
Paulus.
Domnus.
Timaeus.
Cyril.
Tyrannus.
Vitalis
Philogonus.
Paulinus.
Eustathius.
Eulalius.
Eusebius.
Euphonius
Placillus.
Stephanus.
Leontius.
Anianus.
Meletius.
Euzoius.
Meletius (again).
Paulinus.
Dorotheus.
Flavian.
Evagrius.

[1] From Le Quien.

[2] The bishops whose names are in italics are spoken of in the Lives of Ignatius, Athanasius, Chrysostom, and Jerome.

BRIEF NOTES ON THE HERETICS OF THE FIRST FOUR CENTURIES.

As various heretics are frequently alluded to in the previous pages, I here throw into the briefest possible form some account of their principal heresies.

Heretics of the First Century.

I have spoken elsewhere of those heresies of which the germs were latent even in the Apostolic age (1 John iv. 3, 1 Cor. xv. 12, 2 Peter ii. 1), especially of the Colossian and other forms of incipient Gnosticism (Jude iv., Rev. ii. 14 and 15). The Nazarenes were hardly heretics, but a marked type of narrow and Judaising Christians. Ebionism is a particularistic contraction of the Christian religion ; Gnosticism a vague expansion of it. The one is a gross literalism and realism ; the other a fantastic idealism and spiritualism. In the former the spirit is bound in outward forms ; in the latter it revels in licentious freedom. Ebionism makes salvation depend on observance of the law ; Gnosticism on speculative knowledge. Ebionism denies the Divinity of Christ, and sees in the Gospel only a new law ; Gnosticism denies the true Humanity of the Redeemer, and makes His person and His work a mere phantom, a Docetic illusion.[1] Ebion simply means "poor," and Tertullian was mistaken in supposing that there ever was a person of that name. Others supposed it to mean "apostates," from לָהַשׁ, "to deny." The word Elxai, according to Gieseler, means "hidden power" (חֵיל כְּסִי) which applies to the Holy Spirit.[2] The Elkesaites were Judaising Essenes, and their views are perhaps reflected in the pseudo-Clementine homilies. They were specially opposed to the doctrine of St. Paul. They were also called Sampsaeans, because in praying they turned towards the sun (שֶׁמֶשׁ).

The two chief heretics of the first century are Simon Magus and Cerinthus. Of these and of Nicolas of Antioch I have spoken elsewhere.

Hegesippus, in a curious passage (*ap.* Euseb. iii. 32), says that until the days of Trajan, and the death of Symeon, Bishop of Jerusalem, at the age of 120, the Church continued to be "a pure and uncorrupted virgin," but that

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[1] Schaff, *Ante-Nicene Christianity*, ii. 430.

[2] *Life of St. Paul*, i. 444-459 ; *Early Days of Christianity*, ii. 336-353.

after this she was corrupted by *Thebuthis*, who was disappointed because he was not elected bishop. As we know nothing whatever of any person of this name, Credner has gone so far as to conjecture that Thebuthis is only meant for a collective idea for opposition or corruption.[1]

The chief heretics of the SECOND CENTURY are the Gnostics of Syria, Asia Minor, and Egypt; the Montanists and Manicheans, and Patripassians. They are merely enumerated here for purposes of convenient reference.

I. *Syrian Gnostics.*

1. SATURNINUS taught under Hadrian in Antioch. The chief features of his system are Dualism and Asceticism. From the Unknown God emanated seven planetary angels, the Demiurge or God of the Jews, and other Æons and spirits. Satan is the ruler of the Hyle, the world of matter, darkness, and evil.

2. BARDESANES and his son HARMONIUS.—A *Dialogue on Fate* still extant is attributed to Bardesanes. He and his son were poets, and the founders of Syrian hymnology. He is charged with Valentinianism, and he wrote against Marcion. Little is known about his views, and he can hardly be regarded as a heretic on essential points.

3. TATIAN.—See *supra*, i. 97. He founded the hyperascetic sect of the *Encratites* (Abstainers) or *Apotactici* (Denouncers), who, from their objection to the use of wine, even at the Eucharist, were also called *Hydroparastatae* or *Aquatians*. They condemned marriage as intrinsically wrong.

II. *Gnostics of Asia Minor.*

1. CERDO.—He came to Rome about A.D. 141. He was a Dualist, and exercised an unfavourable influence over Marcion in his contrast of the Old with the New Testament.

2. MARCION.—He came to Rome about A.D. 155. For an account of Marcion, the first of the Rationalists, see the Lives of Tertullian and Polycarp (*supra* i. 58, 168).

3. LUCIAN.—He was a presbyter first at Antioch, and then at Nicomedia. He died a martyr A.D. 311. The Arians claimed him as a teacher, and Bishop Alexander of Alexandria associates him with Paul of Samosata. He was a great critic, and it is extremely doubtful whether he was a heretic. Even Baronius (*Ann.* A.D. 311) defends his orthodoxy. He was the founder of the school of Antioch.

4. APELLES.—A disciple of Marcion who added fantastic elements to his master's system.

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[1] Chald. תבתא.

III. *Egyptian Gnostics.*

1. Basilides, fl. A.D. 117-138.—The account of his system given by Hippolytus in the *Philosophumena* differs from those of Irenaeus and Epiphanius. He was the first fully-developed Gnostic, and by a system of seven Æons attempted to account for the origin of evil. The abyss between God and man was bridged over by 365 orders of angels. He borrowed from the Pythagoreans a belief in the mystic sacredness of numbers, and is the inventor of the magical *Abraxas* (= 365). His son Isidore was his only important follower.

2. Carpocrates and his son Epiphanes represent the "extreme left" of the Gnostics, who in their contempt and hatred for matter, treated sin as a matter of no consequence, and substituted unbridled licentiousness for rigid asceticism. They were the first who broke through the reserve of Christians by having pictures of Christ.[1]

3. Valentinus.—He was at Rome with Cerdo and Marcion between A.D. 137-154. He was the ablest of the Gnostics, and developed the most powerful and elaborate system. This system hardly pretended to objective reality.[2] It was a gorgeous philosophic dream of emanations (see Life of Irenaeus, *supra*, i. 84). Heracleon, Ptolemy, Marcus, Colobarsus, and others, as well as Bardesanes, are reckoned among his followers. Lesser and wilder sects of the Gnostics were called *Ophites* (Naasenes, or serpent-worshippers), *Lethites*, *Peratae*, and *Eremites*, whose aberrations, at once foul and absurd, deserve no further notice (see Life of Irenaeus, *supra*, i. 85-87).

Forms of heresy not directly Gnostic in the second and third centuries were those of—

1. The Monarchians, or Unitarians, who in some form or other denied the Divinity of Christ.

2. The Alogians; if the title of the sect be not a mere play of words adopted by Epiphanius to imply that they were both "unreasonable" and denied the doctrine of the Logos.

3. The Theodotians, founded by Theodotus, a cobbler (*σκυτεύς*) of Byzantium (A.D. 170), who held that Christ was a man, though supernaturally begotten as the Messiah. He was excommunicated by Bishop Victor at Rome.

4. The Melchizedekians, founded by a younger Theodotus, who placed Melchizedek above Christ.

5. The Artemonites, founded by Artemon, who attempted by philosophy

[1] Hippol. *Philos.* vii. 32: *εἰκόνας κατασκευάζουσι τοῦ Χριστοῦ λέγοντες ὑπὸ Πιλάτου τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ γενέσθαι.*

[2] See a brief sketch of his views in the Life of Irenaeus.

and geometry to give a more intellectual basis to the doctrine of Theodotus. He was excommunicated by Zephyrinus.

6. The PAULICIANS, founded by PAUL of SAMOSATA, A.D. 260. Paul was a *Ducenarius Procurator*, a high civil officer, who was chosen Bishop of Antioch A.D. 260. He treated the Logos and the Holy Spirit as mere Powers of God having no personality. It was because of his use of the word *homoousios* to identify Christ with the Father that the Synod of Antioch rejected the word in the Sabellian sense. He acted as viceroy to Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, at Antioch. He seems to have yielded to boundless vanity, arrogance, and avarice, even allowing hymns in his own honour to be sung in church. He was deposed by the third Synod of Antioch, A.D. 269, but his deposition could not be carried out till the victory of Aurelian over Zenobia, A.D. 272.

7. The PATRIPASSIANS.—This was a name of scorn given to the Sabellians, because their doctrine virtually involved the crucifixion of the Father. They looked on the Son as a self-limitation of the Father, the Father veiled in the flesh, and charged their opponents with being *Ditheists*, believers in two Gods.

i. Their first prominent teacher was PRAXEAS (on whom see the Life of Tertullian, *supra*, i. 171). He had so much influence at Rome as even to gain the partial sympathy of Bishop Victor, Zephyrinus, and Callistus.

ii. NOETUS, who in favour of his doctrine appealed to Rom. ix. 5, and asked a synod assembled to condemn him "What evil, then, am I doing in glorifying Christ?" Hippolytus charges him with pantheistic views borrowed from Heraclitus.

iii. SABELLIUS.—Though we know but little of him personally, he was "by far the most original, profound, and ingenious of the Ante-Nicene Unitarians, and his system the most plausible rival of orthodox Trinitarianism." His ablest opponent was Bishop Dionysius of Rome. His views were pantheistic, and drew some of their elements from Pagan philosophy. He regarded the Trinity "not as a simultaneous Trinity of *essence*, but as a successive Trinity of *revelation*, returning back to Unity."

8. MACEDONIUS, Bishop of Constantinople, was deposed (A.D. 360) for denying the Divinity of the Holy Spirit. He founded the temporary sect known as Πνευματόμαχοι, "fighters against the Spirit." He was condemned by the clauses added to the Nicene Creed by the Council of Constantinople, A.D. 381.

9. APOLLINARIS, Bishop of Laodicea, A.D. 362, denied the perfectness of Christ's manhood, saying that in Him "God the Word" took the place of the human spirit. He was condemned in the Council of Constantinople (A.D. 361), and in the clause of the Athanasian Creed which describes Christ as "of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting."

As regards other heresies and schisms, an account of the MONTANISTS will

be found in the Life of Tertullian ; of the NOVATIANS in the Life of Cyprian : of the MANICHEANS, PELAGIANS, and DONATISTS in the Life of Augustine ; of ARIUS, and the many shades of Arianism, in the Lives of Athanasius, Hilary, and Basil ; of VIGILANTIUS and JOVINIAN, who cannot in any sense be called either heretics or schismatics, in the Life of Jerome ; and of PRISCILLIAN and his followers in the Lives of Ambrose and Martin of Tours. References will also be found to Photinus, who held that a Divine Emanation ("the Word") was united to the man Jesus, and said that the Holy Ghost was an energy, not a person, and to Aetius and Eunomius, who asserted that Christ was a created being.

The Nestorian heresy, which "divides the substance of Christ" ("who, although he be God and Man, yet is he not two, but one Christ"), condemned in the Council of Ephesus, A.D. 431, and the Eutychian heresy, which "confounded the Persons," and was condemned at Chalcedon, A.D. 451, belong to a later period than that here treated.

The contrasts of the Arian and the Catholic doctrines respecting the nature of Christ have been conveniently summed up as follows :—

Arian doctrine describes Christ as being—

1. A Created Being, though created out of nothing (*κτίσμα ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων*).
2. Not eternally existent (*ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν*—there was [a time] when He was not).
3. Not of the same essence with the Father (*ἀνομοιούσιος, ἀνόμοιος*).

Catholic doctrine defined Christ as being—

1. Begotten, not made (*γεννηθεὶς οὐ ποιηθείς*).
2. Begotten before all worlds (*γεννηθεὶς πρὸ πάντων τῶν αἰώνων*).
3. Of the same essence with the Father (*ὁμοούσιος τῷ πατρί*).

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